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NEW STATESMAN

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The Affront of Fort Grunwick

It was Michael Foot, the chief architect of the Government's industrial relations legislation, who said earlier this year: 'If the freedom of the people of this country, especially the rights of trade unionists, if these precious things of the past had been left to the good sense and fair-mindedness of the judges, we would have few freedoms in this country at all.' After the House of Lords Grunwick judgment even those in the Labour Party who initially disagreed with him may well feel they need to think again. For those on the Left it is not just a question of the heavy-handed inappropriateness of the law on many industrial matters; it is also that the legal Establishment can all too easily ambush the patent intentions of Parliament. The whole purpose of the present Government's legislation has been to settle disputes by means of conciliation and arbitration and not by Mr Heath's route of resort to the courts. But at Grunwick, the TUC and the Labour Party have been hoist by their own petard of vacillation; the gauntlet is now decisively thrown down before both the TUC and the Government. Will they accept that the humiliation of a small union – and the triumph of a determined right-wing employer – is a sufficient reason for disturbing the outlines of the essentially non-interventionist industrial settlement reached between 1974 and 1976?

Certainly the TUC itself has something to answer for. Its verbal bellicosity in support of the Grunwick strike committee has on occasions been as deliberately misleading as some of George Ward's own statements. As one of the strikers, Jayaben Desai, once bitterly said: 'We are drowning in support and starving from lack of action.' The sole strategy the TUC appeared to have was one of mobilising public opinion. Even the Scarman Report's elegant prose failed, however, in that task. The real answer to those who claim that the unions are all-powerful in this country is that it took a year for the Grunwick strikers to attract attention to their plight (outside the ranks of the militant Left) – and that even then they discovered that they could only arouse public interest through the theatre of the mass picket. And, of course, that was a medium that obscured the underlying grievances behind a welter of flying bottles and irrelevancies about the closed shop.

It would be a disaster if the Government itself were now misled into thinking that it is the law on picketing rather than the Employment Protection Act that needs re-examining. In brief the weakness of the Act is that it does not compel any employer to recognise a union; nor does it alter the terms of the 1974 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act whereby an employer can dismiss workers fairly so long as he does not discriminate but sacks them all. But the Act's chief frailty is that it fails to protect its chief institutional product – ACAS – from the sly disingenuousness of an employer like George Ward. Because of Ward's prevarication ACAS was not able to produce a report until eight months after the strike had started. Even then the union concerned, APEX, could only legally complain to ACAS two and a half months later that its recommendation had been ignored.

But that was not all; according to the Act, ACAS shall attempt to settle the matter once more by conciliation, nine months, in Grunwick's case, after the first attempt. But if ACAS's approach was doggedly one-track-minded, that of George Ward has been neatly circuitous. He successfully argued to Lord Denning and the House of Lords that ACAS had let everyone down and made its report invalid by omitting to ballot the workers still in the factory – the *very same* workers George Ward made it impossible for ACAS to ballot by refusing to divulge their names. The House of Lords ruling effectively permits an employer to dawdle until such time as he sees fit to let ACAS in to ballot the workforce on union recognition. And it also permits an employer, given his position as an employer, sufficient time to browbeat his employees into falling in line with his views. In the meanwhile the union must wait outside the factory gate. In a year when an industrial democracy Bill was to be passing through Parliament, December has brought a very sorry final curtain call.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

David Steel's Predicament

Foolish men have compared the debate on direct elections to the European Assembly with the contest over the Reform Bill of 1832. Wise men cannot see the case for such an august comparison. Your reporter is, however, obliged to say that the scenes in the Commons on Tuesday night during the last stages of the debate were exciting enough to behold, even if the issue itself is hardly the most burning question of the day. Were you in favour of the regional list, or did you want first-past-the-post? Myself, I rather fancied a sort of first-past-the-regional-list – get the matter over with as soon as possible. And so, as the House filled up (for most of the debate there had been only 30 or 40 Members on either side), and it became clear that there would be no late-night sitting, not even an extension to 11 p.m., my spirits rose.

It is marvellous to look down from the gallery during a major vote, and see absolutely *tout le monde* pass well within spitting distance. Just a little effort and splat! I could have landed one on Nigel Lawson, old Blaby-face. On the Government front bench sat Jim Callaghan, enjoying a little discussion with Dennis Skinner. I gather that Skinner, always the optimist, made a final attempt to persuade Callaghan to vote for first-past-the-post (the system the PM, were it not for the pact, would undoubtedly have preferred to put forward). In the Strangers' Gallery sat Mrs Paul Channon, explaining PR to her daughter: 'You see, er, everyone has two or three votes, and, er, you all vote, and then, um, all the votes are sort of put together. Oh look, look! There's Mrs Thatcher.' 'Bleeeugh.' 'And look, look! There's daddy. He's one of the tellers.' 'Is he pleased?' 'Um, I'm not sure.'

Earlier in the evening, the following conversation was heard in the corridors. First PR enthusiast: 'Bryan Magee is going to come back from the opera at ten.' Second PR enthusiast: 'I wonder what time the vote will be. You know how bored Bryan gets. He may not stay till eleven.'

The great set-piece of the debate was Ted Heath's speech. It pleased nobody. Loyalist Tories were annoyed: 'Trains and trouble, that's what Ted means nowadays.' One of them quoted Talleyrand on Napoleon: 'I am amazed that such a great man could be so badly brought up.' As for the PR-loving Tories, they left the chamber swearing that Heath had single-handedly lost them 30 votes by his manner during the debate. Certainly the old boy was not on form. 'Suffering from train-lag,' muttered a colleague of mine. But I cannot help wondering whether we are not beginning to see the decline of the elder statesman. I detect all the symptoms of the *lues wilsoniana*, Wilson's Disease – an excessive devotion to making large sums of money by the publication of worthless books. The Tories are of course all in favour of making large sums of money – but they would prefer the method to be slightly less vulgar.

In addition to their annoyance at the book-signing spree, the Tories have begun to notice that Heath is actually a pompous old wind-bag. Last autumn in Blackpool they thronged to his CPC lecture (so much so that a larger hall had to be used). They came away from the lecture bored stiff. Two years ago when Heath spoke in the House he was heard with great respect. He had approximately the same effect as Banquo's ghost (although he did *not*, as in the recent television version of Verdi's *Macbeth*, appear in the middle of a bowl of jelly). On Tuesday night the House filled up to hear him – and he was mocked. His argument in favour of PR was so vaguely phrased and aimlessly delivered that it was a relief when Robert Adley intervened to ask Heath how he was to reply to a party worker who had said: I took your advice on local government reform, health service reform and water reform – how can you expect me to believe you on *this*?

Throughout the debate the mood of the House had been fractious and quibbling There seemed to be many more interventions than usual, and there was no shortage of subversive comment. This was not the sort of climate in which one would expect Merlyn Rees to thrive. Nor did he. In his early speech he gave the impression of a man who was struggling desperately to conceal either the fact that he did not know what he was talking about or his lack of conviction in the case he was making.

But just how embarrassed should the Government be? Certainly the whole drafting of the Bill and the manoeuvrings on the voting had been from the start an exercise in political expediency rather than principle. Callaghan, Foot and Rees were simply mounting a be-nice-to-David campaign, and if the campaign did not come off in quite the way intended – well, they had tried.

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Almost at once, the Liberal Party showed signs of recurrent Pardomania. Pardoe: 'If the Labour Party is incapable of continuing the pact like this, it is incapable of governing the country and should be turned out immediately.' This is surely a non-sequitur, borne of the mad Pardovian notion that the country is becoming ungovernable merely because Pardoe isn't getting what he wants. Cyril Smith: 'I am delighted from the point of view of the future of the pact. I think it has laid the foundations of erosion for the pact.' This is a pretty dotty metaphor.

The House broke up, for the most part, in a genial mood. It had been good fun all round. But as the first editions of the next day's papers came on the street, there must have been some very worried Liberals indeed. For once again, the Thorpe affair had hit the headlines, this time in the *Daily Mirror*, who promised a new set of revelations on the alleged cover-up. The Thorpe affair is in a curious state at the moment – you have to read all the papers in order to keep track of it. Nobody seems to pick up anybody else's story. All the advances are piecemeal. But to any Liberal proposing to plunge the country into a general election, the risk should be obvious.

For the scandal is by no means over. As the *Mirror* put it: 'The drama has been played out in public over the past 22 months. The final act is yet to come.' And until the final act is over, the most absorbing questions about the Liberals are questions about the Thorpe affair. In vain does Steel tour the country outlining his political philosophy. In vain does Michael Steed explain the virtues of PR to the long-suffering *Guardian* readership. In vain will any special assembly debate the merits and demerits of the pact. What we want to know is: who hired Newton, and why?

Steel's position this week, then, was doubly awkward. On the one hand, the mysterious return of the bloodstain in the carpet. On the other, the unreasonable insistence of party elements on the full pound of flesh. Steel himself might well consider that the vote on PR was a sufficient improvement on previous votes to count as a small achievement. But he was boxed in by loonies and forced to agree to Wednesday morning's statement, calling for a meeting with the Prime Minister.

In doing so he had everything to lose, and very little to gain. Whatever was on his shopping-list this time, by way of profit-sharing schemes and so forth, his bargaining position was non-existent. How can one strike a bargain on the basis of other people's pique? How indeed can one negotiate on the basis of a threat of political suicide? It might suit Callaghan, it might turn out possible for him to throw a life-line to Steel. But if this was inconvenient, Steel would leave the meeting empty-handed, to face his hysterical troops.

This, I'm afraid, is where we must leave Steel, on Wednesday afternoon, waiting for Downing Street to return his call, wondering how long his policies can last, when the next general election will be and what, if anything, he can rescue from the fiasco. We are sorry for Steel. We like him. We recommend that he has a good rest over Christmas, and that on his return he should do the decent thing, join the Labour Party and forget he ever knew his silly friends.

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Phillip Whitehead

Fixing TV Programmes

Allegations of programme-faking are in the air again, with the row this week between ATV and Tate and Lyle. Was jesting Pilate the first television producer? You would think from some of the recent allegations (including Tate and Lyle's extraordinary advertisement campaign) that a whole series of programmes have been fixed or faked, at best misleading, at worst mendacious. Seeing is not believing. It never has been. The visual record is selective, right back to the Bayeux Tapestry showing us what Bishop Odo thought we ought to see. Pre-war newsreels packaged fascism so that it did not spoil the overall entertainment mix, as *Before Hindsight*, selective in its turn, has reminded us. More recently the imperatives of the schedules have given events a warp, from the half-minute a returning officer nervously waits for the signal from the telly men before reading his result live into *Election Special* to the half day before Ali and Foreman were allowed to fight at 4 a.m., Kinshasa time, to please the Time Lords of American closed circuit television.

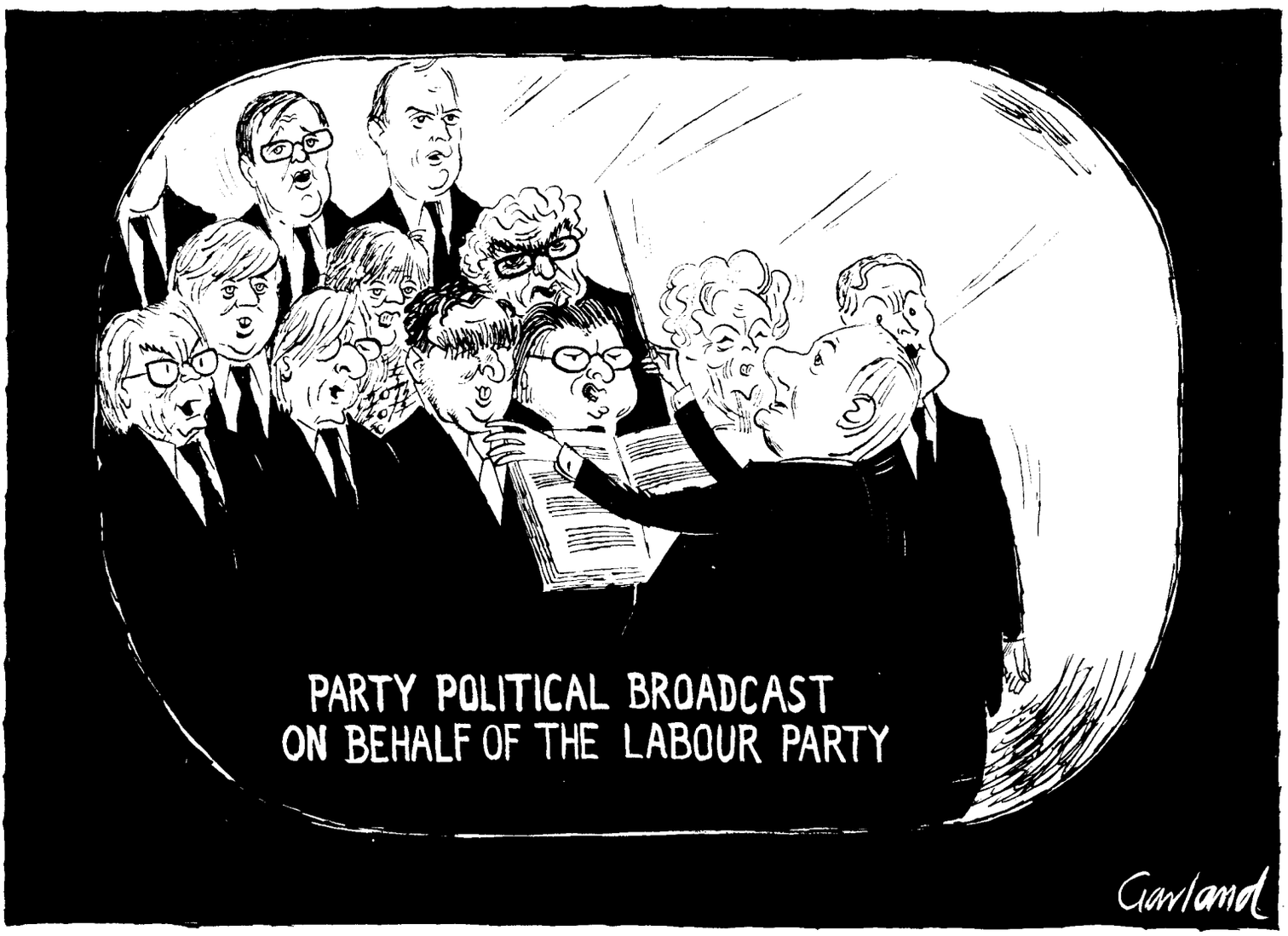
There have been three separate complaints recently; about the construction of factoids to boost a story without visual means of support, about the alleged rehearsing of interviewees with a loaded story line, and about concealment of identity in an avowedly partisan political broadcast. The clamour can confuse, but these three separate incidents illustrate many of the problems of contemporary film-making for television – external pressures and constraints as well as a proper regard for your own ethic.

The first ought to be the simplest. Can we show something happening which was not naturally happening at the time the cameras were available? The whole grammar of television film is built on the acceptance of one kind of 'cheating' – that the scene must look natural, and that natural implies that people should appear unaware of the highly unnatural fact that they are surrounded by cameras and technicians. Since more angles are wanted than there are cameras, reconstruction begins with the interviewer's cutaway questions and proceeds from there. As the BBC Guide to Principles and Practice puts it:

> An Ambassador may be asked to present his credentials twice to a Head of State; once with the camera inside the room and once outside. A pilot may be asked to taxi his Boeing 707 twice towards a Middle Eastern terminal building at night, because the first time the locally hired generator failed.

The guide went on to distinguish between the reconstruction of scenes which you knew had happened, and the deliberate construction of scenes which the producer might believe approximated to the facts, but which could discredit himself and his craft.

There have been such incidents recently. Again, there is nothing new about the temptation. I remember a keen young producer on *Gallery* 15 years ago pondering on the problem of showing the poverty of the unemployed in the North East. He had heard that they went out in the morning to pick for coal in the spoil heaps. To make sure of his shots he bought a couple of hundredweight of coal and buried it in the heaps, then got some willing locals to dig it out on camera. There was a row. He repented, and is now, I believe, something rather grand in Religious Broadcasting. Just the other day *World in Action* fell into the same trap. Another keen young fellow, crestfallen to find good enough visuals of anti-Japanese feeling in the United States, had some T-shirts printed with the slogan: 'Sony – from the people who gave you Pearl Harbour.'



'. . . Tyndall has two – but very small . . .'

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The *Guardian* Diary, which has been working over such stories recently, picked it up. The editor Brian Lapping, in a statement which he now bitterly regrets, was quoted as saying: 'I don't think we did anything wrong.' It *is* wrong. You are passing the audience a dud cheque. Worse still, you are weakening the position of others who are trying to deal in the currency of fact, when the pressure is on them, as it has been this week on ATV.

Serious allegations have been made about Antony Thomas's third film on South Africa, 'Working For Britain'. Tate and Lyle launched an extraordinary assault on the filming at the Doornkop Estate, a part of their Illovo subsidiary which they have since sold. It has taken the form of putting out a kind of Jackdaw kit of affidavits and letters purporting to show that Thomas faked his interviews to discredit Illovo. This is when the heat is really on. You have filmed abroad in a difficult country, sometimes unauthorised. Then pressure – not all of it ethical – is applied. Your interviewees are confronted by their employers. Statements taken from them are contrasted with what they have told you, and it is alleged that you or your interpreter rehearsed them in false answers. Was the programme faking it? Tate and Lyle ran headlong into ATV's patrician Managing Director, Lord Windlesham – not a man to be squared by Mr Cube. Windlesham showed Tate and Lyle the rushes. Of ten statements by Doornkop workers he allowed the possibility that three only, who had not been selected at random by Thomas himself, might have been nobbled. He checked with an expert in the Zulu language whose opinion was that the interviews 'were entirely spontaneous and natural, and I would strongly disagree with any suggestion that the answers had been scripted, rehearsed, or in any other way prepared in advance'.

Although Windlesham, to make assurance doubly sure, agreed to drop the two men and a boy brought in from the fields, and to stick to the residents in the Doornkop compound who had been picked up by Thomas himself, it was obvious that what Tate and Lyle were after was the total exclusion of their name and activities from the programme, and they would go to great lengths to get it. They failed, but the attempt is a salutary reminder to any filmmaker that – three months after the event – not everything people have told him will remain their version of events. He will depend on his superiors trusting his judgment; so his facts have to be right.

Should the facts ever be extracted by withholding the identity or purpose of the film-maker? This is the heart of the rumpus about Joe Ashton's party political broadcast attacking the National Front. It led to shocked editorialising by the two television news organisations. Some Conservatives joined in, forgetting the far greater sums which their party pours into slick image-building exercises, where a leader is sometimes humanised by the skilful cutting together of a tiny fraction of many thousands of feet of conversation with the people. Ashton's film really said something – which is why it hurt. It may have been mistaken to have elevated the grubby gauleiters of the Frost above their fellow racist groups. Party political broadcasts are made under extreme difficulty – quite apart (in the case of Labour and the Liberals) from lack of funds. You cannot use up-to-date news film. You cannot use statements by other political figures. You cannot use clips from documentaries still fresh in the public mind. So there had to be scratched film of the dictators, nothing of marches by the Front. The Millwall football fans' account of their flirtation with such marches, or Martin Webster's filmed by-election speech – 'The National Front is a racialist front, so join the National Front' – would have been forbidden. A party political broadcast has to get the best approximation of reality it can – in the raw streets of Hoxton. I still think Joe Ashton might have done better to identify himself as a Labour MP, but that would have turned the interviews down other paths, when time and film were scarce.

The fact is that PPBs are not like other broadcasts. The broadcasters hate them. They are a form of partisan access that runs against all the conventional wisdom of balance which is the basis of current affairs reporting. Ashton's film was actually censored by the BBC. As long as they do not have access to facilities, becoming more like a party political version of *One Pair of Eyes*, they will be – on the Labour side where money is scarce – either neat homilies to camera or hard-hitting but crude films. Joe Ashton, in accent and manner a bit of a working-class populist himself, chose to sock it to the Front on its East End territory. If we want such programmes to have the breadth of production and film library assistance without which a documentary maker's code of conduct and blood-chits to interviewees can hardly be enforced, then we should see that the broadcasters provide it – in fair proportions to the parties.

It is hard enough to say much about racialism on television, even though the media do not claim to be neutral between the racialist and the anti-racialist. In different ways the obstruction encountered by the BBC programme and ATV's difficulties in South Africa show why. So did the truncating of 'Last Grave at Dimbaza' some time ago by the BBC. The producer is under special imperative to show only what he sees, as an illustration of what he believes. There must be no fixing of inconvenient facts. That technique may be used against programmes, but if they have avoided it themselves they will be able to plead that their vision of things as they are should be seen as it is, unfixed and unashamed.

Robert McCloughlin

A Defeat for Soares?

Bringing down Mario Soares's minority Socialist government is being regarded here as something of a feat. Not that it ever seemed especially durable: it didn't, and its fall has surprised nobody. But there was novelty in the constitutional methods that were used to accomplish it. The opposition parties that finally voted it out of office on a motion of confidence last week seemed astonished at their own temerity and rather relieved they had not brought the roof down over their heads. Grand phrases like 'This Democratic Act' and 'Triumph for Democracy' went ringing round the hall as the sun came up on a weary, all-night sitting; even the Socialists joined in the self-congratulations. The civilians, the theme went, had handled their first political crisis and the soldiers still slept in their barracks. Democracy worked.

Or did it? Simple parliamentary rules are fine for destroying governments but not, apparently, for conjuring up new ones. For all its admirable qualities, the new constitution is not much help here – journalists and politicians who have laboured through its 300 articles in search of guidelines on breaking political deadlocks have surfaced with meagre pickings. All that has emerged is that the nation's destiny is in the hands of a single steely-eyed soldier, President Ramalho Eanes, who in spite of (or perhaps because of) his dormant role during Soares's premiership has become the Right's great hope of an end to economic shambles.

So far, Eanes has approached the problem in a characteristically minor key. His first concern was to persuade his easily excited people that the fall of the government was not a signal for a national wringing of hands and that democracy was safe. To do this he disappeared to West Germany for a three-day visit, calmly remarking that the business of choosing a new prime minister could wait until he came back.

The worry, shared by most political leaders, that the people would over-react to the crisis was probably not misplaced. Memories of two years of coups and counter coups, real or imagined, are not easily wiped out. During the parliamentary debate customers crowded over transistors in cafés and shops listening attentively to the latest barrage of economic statistics and rhetoric and wondering out loud what would become of the country. At times, the old talent for rumour and alarm began to reappear, as every plane passing overhead became a troop carrier on its way to take up some position, every recruit on his way to see his girl the vanguard of a new coup.

These were minor manifestations of a syndrome Soares hoped he had erased. In his own eyes, his achievement was to hold the country together for 16 months in a more relaxed, democratic mood than at any time since the fall of the old regime three years ago. His party is fond of remarking that post-colonial Portugal faces none of the violent unrest suffered by France after it gave up the war in Algeria. The Socialists

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also claim they have tidied up the mess in industry and agriculture left by the Marxist soldiers and that Portugal is once more fit to be seen in western capitalist company.

Where Soares slipped up, his critics insist, was in handling the government. Certainly the proud orator marshalling his people back to the paths of progressive sanity gave way at times to an impression of confusion and uncertainty, as ministers pursued directly contradictory policies and the balance of payments debts mounted up. Faced by defeat, some members of the government could not be blamed for trying to escape: Henrique Medina Carreira, the Finance Minister, tried to resign so often that he hardly seemed to belong to the government at all. At Soares's news conference, the day after the vote, he was to be seen nervously fiddling with his pocket calculator, as though last-minute sums would somehow rescue the situation. Beyond this, Soares did nothing to seek an agreement with the opposition. Instead of making a little goodwill go a long way – by cajoling, flattery or any other time-honoured political tricks – he treated their demands for a share of power with hard-nosed contempt.

Nevertheless the favourite for the job of leading the second constitutional government is Soares himself, simply because there is no one else. Perhaps relieved to have the weeks of tension finally over, Soares is now once again the flamboyant statesman and socialist leader of international renown, bright and cheerful in a new shirt and suit and full of confidence in the future. But his position has not changed. Just as he would not tamper with his party's programme for the sake of winning opposition support, so now there will be no coalition with any party. If the opposition didn't like this it would be up to them to find an alternative.

There are not many alternatives open to four quite disparate political parties, none of which can command a majority in Parliament and each of which can hardly stand the sight of the others. The most reasonable solution was for the Socialists, the largest party with 35 per cent of the vote, to rule as a minority. For a while this worked. In the interests of democracy, communists, social democrats and conservatives turned the other way when Soares presented his programme 16 months ago and gave him enough support to get a substantial number of new laws through Parliament. Now they have pulled the rug from under his feet they have no new suggestions or at least none that stand much chance.

According to western democratic practice, the President might ask the leader of the second largest party to form a government. But the Social Democrats share only 24 per cent of the vote and are an uneasy mixture of conservative voters and progressive deputies. The Socialists scornfully regard them all as right-wingers and will have nothing to do with them except on their own terms. Francisco Sa Carneiro, their leader, is the *prima donna* of Portuguese politics – a blunt, tempestuous man whose appetite for confrontation makes him an unlikely choice. In an extraordinary piece of comic opera that stole the limelight from the Socialists last month Sa Carneiro's abrupt resignation raised hopes in the government camps that life might become a little easier. Not for long: Sa Carneiro's magnetic hold over the voters ensured his swift reinstatement, and his party's position is as ambiguous as before.

That leaves only the Conservatives' Diego Freitas Da Amaral, a smiling, be spectacled law professor, and the Communists' Alvaro Cunhal. As leaders of parties with less than 20 per cent of the vote and, in the case of Cunhal, of doubtful allegiance to democratic principles, they can hardly be considered.

In such circumstances what the opposition thought it would gain from joining forces to bring down the government is a puzzle. All three parties admit that governing without the Socialists would be impossible, yet continue to hope for a tip in the balance to Left or Right. This Soares is determined to avoid, insisting it would polarise tensions, set North against South and make democratic rule impossible. Given the chaos that followed Caetano's fall, this possibility cannot be discounted.

They can, however, take advantage of the general suspicion that somehow the crisis was the fault of foreigners. For Soares to stake the life of his government on the IMF's unpopular austerity measures was an astute move, for this is the only thing Communists see eye to eye with Conservatives on. None of the parties wants cuts in industrial growth, considering how much catching up Portugal has to do if it is to compete with the Common Market in ten years' time. But unless the Western countries call off the IMF, or something at home buckles, the vital foreign loans will remain locked up and the gaping maw of trading debts will get to work on the gold reserves – the distilled essence of all the roads, hospitals, schools and welfare handouts that Salazar's Portugal miraculously did without – and these would probably hold out only for a year.

The pressure on Eanes to drop his role of constitutional protector and lunge into dirty, daily politics has been growing. It will become intense if the weeks wear on with no sign of a political agreement and a new general election in the spring becomes inevitable. If that happens the President may seriously consider the role of a De Gaulle, if only to stop his generals getting a Pinochet act together. The army has been pursuing its professional activities with single-minded zeal under his strict supervision but no one is sure that it will forgo for ever its favourite hobby, politics.

Lisbon

Allan Ashbolt

The End for Whitlam

Something unfunny, though not wholly unexpected, happened on the way to the ballot-boxes in Australia. Towards the end of November public opinion polls – accepted here as a reasonably reliable guide, because compulsory voting narrows the margin of error – indicated that the Labour Party might be edging ahead of the Government in popularity. But as the campaign gathered momentum, the polls showed a steady drift back to the Government, until it looked as though Labour's only chance of office was to gain the second preferences of the new centre party, the Australian Democrats. As it turned, out, the Democrats captured about 10 per cent of the votes nationwide, but in doing so took almost as many away from Labour as from the Liberals. There was no need even to wait for the distribution of preferences, and after a few hours of counting Whitlam conceded defeat. He congratulated the Liberal-National/Country Party coalition on a convincing win (almost the same majority, indeed, as in 1975), thanked Labour candidates and supporters, promised that as soon as the results in all seats were clear he would call the parliamentary caucus together to choose an Executive, then added simply, abruptly with an air of dignified finality: 'I myself will not be nominating for the position of leader.'

Perhaps the nature of the man demanded that, by obstinately seeking self-vindication for the events of November-December 1975, he should prepare to bear this final humiliation. Whatever may be said against Whitlam, he has always had a superb sense of theatrical form, a carefully nurtured instinct for the correct gesture – even if it was only, as in one notorious instance during the late 1960s, tipping a glass of water over an irritating foreign affairs minister. But in this election he was undoubtedly Labour's albatross. Not because of any gaffes he uttered nor because of any minor tactical blunders he committed: rather because of his record as Prime Minister during 1974-75, when inflation first soared and unemployment first expanded. This inability to control the rapid withdrawal of overseas investment and the sudden, drastic destabilisation of the economy is what sticks in the public mind, along with the image of Labour as the party of disunity.

NEXT WEEK

the NEW STATESMAN will be a double issue covering the two weeks over Christmas and the New Year. Copies will be available in London on Wednesday, elsewhere on Thursday. The cover price will be 50p.

Contents will include unpublished fiction by Paul Theroux and Kingsley Amis, an essay by Northrop Frye, Alan Watkins on Drink and Hilary Spurling on Food, James Fenton on Nonsense Verse, Edward Pygge's Christmas Quiz and an additional, tougher, crossword by Salamanca.

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It is a false image in many respects and not quite fair to Whitlam, whose impulses were compassionate, though he was utterly unprepared to deal with a period of capitalist crisis and contraction. True, Whitlam was on this occasion also saddled by his advisers with an absurd proposal for the abolition of company payroll tax – absurd because the party has been arguing since 1975 for a consumer-led, not an investment-led, recovery. To compound the confusion, he foreshadowed compensating for this loss of revenue by abandoning, or at least delaying, income tax deductions which the Government had already formulated and put in the legislative pipeline. Thus he was further denying the principle of a consumer-led recovery, and it hardly helped him that the scale of reductions was grossly inequitable as between higher and lower wage levels. Whitlam failed to realise that, in an electorate infused with the ethos of capitalist cupidity, a dollar in the hand is worth ten dollars in the public purse.

The scenario for the next few years is not difficult to sketch: indeed, predictions sound like end-of-the-boom platitudes. Unemployment will swell, inflation may drop but only slightly, expenditure on public works and welfare will be further restricted. Small businesses will wither on the inflationary vine, more graziers will be forced off the land; but overseas mining companies will broaden in range and volume of activity. Labour-intensive industries will encounter cost problems, even when (like automobile manufacturing) solidly impacted in the economy. Repatriation of profits by foreign corporations will reach a new high and Australian equity in shareholdings will struggle to climb out of the present low. The poor will get poorer, the workers angrier and the middle class bitchier.

The fundamental question is what Labour will do in these circumstances, how it will regroup and fight in the federal sphere. If the party is to present a genuine political alternative, instead of standing merely for an alternative style of capitalist management, then it must restore and refurbish its socialist dynamic. It must risk going ahead of public consciousness, stop taking opinion polls before it decides on strategies and start making better use of its considerable human and organisational resources.

Considered overall, and even remembering that Labour governs competently in three states, the party is a shattered and demoralised shambles – ideologically a conglomerate of contending sects and factions bound together merely by a common desire to get a fair deal from the capitalist system. Unless it can fashion policies which take into account the shifting balance of economic power in the world, the rising expectations of ex-colonial peoples, conflicts between national identity and trans-national financial penetration, the threat to democratic liberties from monopolies, bureaucracies and military cliques; unless it can move away from parochial preoccupations, suburban horizons and middle-class aspirations, unless it can make a creative leap beyond existing social dissonances and contradictions, then it will be relegated for the next 20 years to oppositional politics and the role of buffoon to the ruling class.

Sydney

Alexander Cockburn

Hubert Humphrey's Last Battle

Quite in keeping with his role in American affairs over the last 30 years or so, Senator Hubert Humphrey is now dying, just as he lived, in full public view. His doctors finally declared that his cancer was inoperable, and he returned to Washington – so gaunt that sometimes he only seems identifiable by the famous grin that has carried him through almost every national political campaign that one can remember.

Washington has turned out to greet him. He has been the guest of honour at innumerable fêtes and galas. President Carter put him up in Camp David. He has won standing ovations in Congress. It seems, to draw the macabre conclusion, that Humphrey's final achievement will be to turn his terminal experience into a cheery public ritual, part of the Great American Way to go. Innumerable observers have chided American civilisation for excising the fact of death from the ritual texture of everyday life. Humphrey has gone to the other extreme. But the result has not really been a sharper focus on one of the greatest social and political problems facing the United States, namely cancer. For to focus on the disease that is killing Humphrey would be to think, as we shall see, political thoughts.

In 1930, when Hubert Humphrey was 19 and about to attend college, the death rate from cancer in the United States was 112 per 100,000. In 1940, the year he married, the rate was 120. By the time he entered the US Senate in 1948 it had risen to 125. Today the rate stands at 132 per 100,000: an 11-per-cent rise per decade over the last 40 years. This year 385,000 Americans will die of cancer, a victim every one and a half minutes. One out of every six deaths is due to cancer. Over a quarter of the population will develop cancer in their lifetimes and one out of every five will die of it.

Only three major causes of death (of which cancer is second only to heart disease in the United States) have significantly increased in recent years in the US: cancer, homicide and cirrhosis of the liver. Much of the increase in cancer is due to smoking. For males the rate of death from lung cancer rose from 18 per 100,000 in 1950 to 52 per 100,000 today. For women it tripled from 4 to 12.3. And the cancer plague is not indifferently distributed by providence. It is not – contrary to established ideology – a simple case of 'bad luck'.

Since 1950, when Hubert Humphrey was first campaigning for civil rights in the US Senate, the cancer rate among black males has increased 50 per cent; among white males 20 per cent. More blacks get cancer and more die from it. As the American Cancer Society puts it: 'Because blacks predominate in the lower socio-economic groups, many are exposed to industrial carcinogens.' Paralleling such emphasis on the industrial environment, it is now widely accepted that from 70 to 90 per cent of all cancers are environmentally induced or related.

This, evidently, is the situation to which politicians extolling Hubert Humphrey should be addressing themselves. Americans die of cancers caused by the air they breathe, the water they drink, the food they eat and even (given the recent ban on certain children's nightwear for being carcinogenic) the clothes they wear. Yet the response to Humphrey's cancer has entirely diverted examination of what could be done about such environmental poisoning. The emphasis has rather been on technology – can the cancer be successfully cut out, and on chemotherapeutic techniques – rather than on the circumstances which probably provoked the cancer in the first place.

To take the environmental aspect a stage further, and thus see the sort of political action required: it is now estimated that there are 50,000 manufactured chemicals to which Americans are exposed in one way or another. Of these 12-15,000 have been found to be harmful. As many as 1,500 are believed to cause cancer.

But no more than 50 of the suspect chemicals are regulated by the Federal Government. In the workplace, where people are most directly exposed to heavy doses of chemicals, there are rules governing less than 25. Each year 800 new chemicals are put into production. The Government tries to test 150 of them each year. The programme is so understaffed and underfunded that it lags far behind. Even where tests have been completed, there have not been enough people to write up and publish the results.

Roger Woddis

Change of Heart

British Leyland, who have hitherto withheld recognition of black unions in South Africa because of lucrative contracts, may re-consider their policy.

Nobly, nobly, British Leyland
From the compounds looked away,
Weeping for their black employees
Living on starvation pay.

Under company investment
Runs the sempiternal theme:
Practical considerations
Override the cherished dream.

Contracts that we have with Cape Town
Top three thousand million pounds:
Money talks, while dying children
Make the quietest of sounds.

'Slaves in darker times have served us,
How can we help slaves today?'
Do not doubt that Michael Edwardes
Has it in his pending-tray.

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Any determined confrontation with cancer by the Government needs to involve testing all chemicals before they are released into the environment. But there is little political pressure to do so. The testing programme, until now, has received less than 6 per cent of the National Cancer Institute's resources, and less than 7 per cent of the Institute's staff. It has been charged in Congress that the Government is only managing to test 27 new chemicals (out of 800) each year.

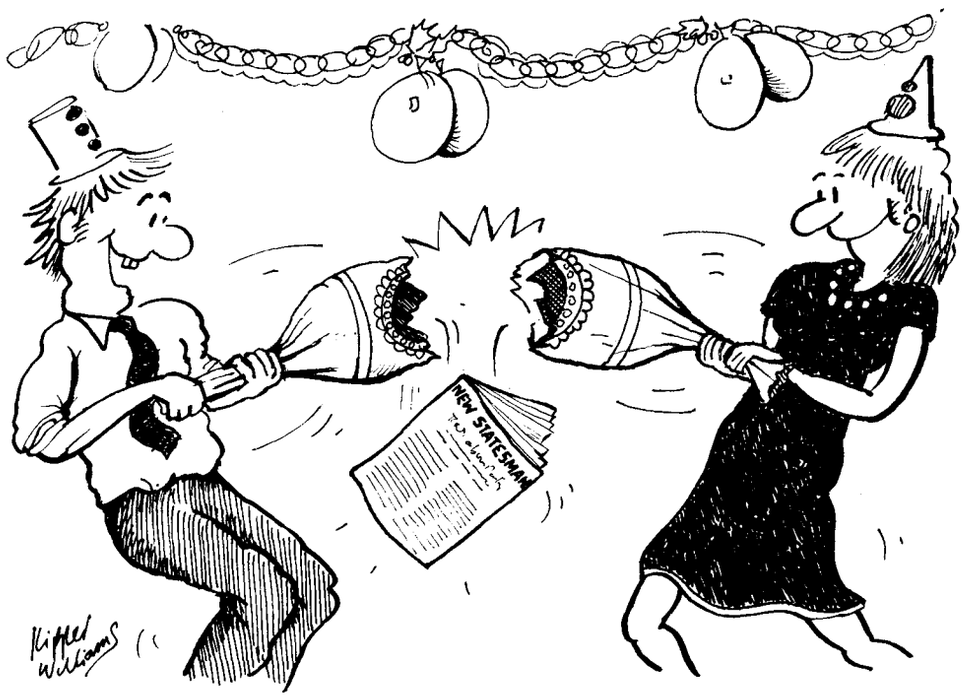
Now, Humphrey hails from Minnesota and has developed cancer of the bladder. Both these facts have symbolism. In the cancer profile of the United States, compiled by the National Cancer Institute, the industrial parts of Minnesota consistently show up on the maps, blotched with red – indicating that the state has had significantly high instances of various cancers prevalent along the Great Lakes and in the industrial North East: cancers of the larynx, oesophagus, rectum, breast, bladder, large intestine, stomach, kidney and prostate.

Minnesota, indeed, has been a battleground on which issues of environmental cancer have been fought. Some years ago it was discovered that traces of cancer-causing substances contained in the taconite tailings produced by the Reserve Mining Company were finding their way into the drinking water of Duluth. Reserve had been systematically dumping the tailings from its mining operations into Lake Superior. Although it has been established that this practice was and is dangerous to the residents – who desperately tried to import pure water by tanker – it was allowed to go on. The Reserve case and the judge who found against the company became national symbols of the environmental war. And, indeed, Vice-President Mondale, when a Senator, was one of those politicians who remained on the sidelines while Reserve fought through innumerable courts both state and federal to retain its right to pollute the lake. Even the present settlement leaves Reserve dumping in the lake until 1980 – whereupon they will dump on land, in a manner still charged by a Minnesota public agency to be dangerous.

The bladder cancer suffered by Humphrey has risen 80 per cent in incidence for men over the last 25 years. Once again, its incurrence is not generally a matter of bad luck but rather of economic and industrial arrangements and practices. Of bladder cancer the National Cancer Institute says:

> It is nearly certain that industrial exposures have produced the striking geographical clusters of bladder cancer in males. Of the 21 counties in New Jersey, 18 have bladder cancer rates in the highest of male rates for all US counties. Indeed, the rate for Salem County, NJ (16.1 per 100,000) ranks highest among all American counties with a white population of at least 10,000. In Salem County, approximately one-fourth of the workforce is employed in chemical and allied industries, and workers exposed to chemicals such as 2-Naphthylamine are known to be at increased risk of bladder cancer.

Amid the hail of evidence about the environmental and occupational causes of cancer – particularly in the petro-chemical, petroleum and mining industries – what is happening politically, in the form of pressure for increased supervision, regulation and control? Practically nothing. Industry,



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and its representatives in Congress, are fighting bitterly against regulation of its activities through such manoeuvres as opposition to animal testing (disputing its human relevance), refusal to release employee health records for analysis by Government epidemiologists, arguments for bogus 'safe' levels of exposure, efforts to overturn a statutory ban on sale of carcinogenic substances such as saccharine. The spirit of this approach is best summed up by one recent industry proposal that pesticides known to cause sterility should be handled by people who did not want more children.

These are the policies of health and hence the politics of reform. One might have thought that Humphrey's public demonstration of the effects of the second largest killer in the United States might have stimulated some interest, even some action in this quarter. Not so. The passing of the 'happy warrior', so securely part of the system for his active life, is not even now being allowed seriously to discommode arrangements which are killing more than the combined victims of the wars in Korea and Vietnam each year.

New York

Ian Mather

Bokassa and the French

Without a helping hand from Giscard d'Estaing the irrelevantly extravagant coronation of Bokassa as emperor of the Central African Empire could not have taken place. By actively lending his country's political support to Bokassa's grandiloquent scheme and staking much of the cost the French President has helped to promote the racist image of black Africans as overgrown children.

The role of France in nurturing the outrageous Bokassa's self-delusions demonstrates that the 'advanced liberalism' on which Giscard prides himself is strictly not for export. French policy in former French colonial Africa is pure *real politik*, taking no account of Bokassa's gross denial of human rights, making no protest at his notorious ear-cutting activities, and appearing to condone the fact that one of the 25 poorest nations on earth can squander resources it does not possess on a ceremony which is totally meaningless to its people.

Giscard's private predilections fit neatly into this cynical pattern. The Central African Empire, a country bigger than France but with a population of under 2 million and less than 200 miles of surfaced roads is one of the few remaining refuges for wild animals in the world. As a fanatical hunter Giscard is determined to preserve this corner of Africa for his *chasse gardée*. He makes several trips each year to Bokassa's private hunting area, a large tract of jungle in the east of the country accessible only by private plane. Here, accompanied by Bokassa, the French President can shoot elephants, hippos, giraffes and the rare white rhino to his heart's content. When Bokassa nominated himself emperor last December Giscard was the first head of state to send off a message of congratulation to him as 'Emperor Bokassa I'.

French aid to its former colony totalled over £11m. last year. This year, in addition to officially-agreed aid, the French Government has made a number of *ex gratia* payments to help the Empire (current budget deficit £13m.) to meet some of its bills for coronation paraphernalia. In August France took over the training at home, and at French expense, of the 130 Central African soldiers who were to be taught to ride French thoroughbred horses bought by Bokassa to accompany his gilded carriage in the coronation procession. The French also gave Bokassa credits totalling over £1m. to buy vehicles (a fleet of Mercedes and 200 BMW motor cycles to provide individual escorts to coronation guests), and to pay for some of the decorations. France also indemnified several French suppliers who were not paid by Bokassa.

Of course France has a considerable financial stake in the empire. Last year 45 per cent of goods shipped from the Empire were owned by French companies and 44 per cent of all exports went to France. Most commerce and industry is still in the hands of French companies. Yet on financial grounds alone any breach between Bokassa and France would be no more than a minor inconvenience to the French. The net flow of capital to France from the Empire is less than the total of French aid. Moreover, half of French aid goes on salaries of French teachers, medical and other workers in the Empire. A further fifth is a contribution to the country's Treasury to pay civil servants and the most pressing debts. This leaves only just over one fifth for investment.

The Empire's rich uranium deposits provide a stronger motive for French support. The deposits, estimated at £70m. are in inaccessible swampy territory at Bakouma 500 miles from the capital, Bangui. In the mid-1960s a French research syndicate consisting of the Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique (CAE) and the Compagnie Française des Minerais d'Uranium (CEMU), a Rothschild company, began exploratory work, while two other French companies experimented with a technique for refining the metal at the minehead to facilitate transport. But the results were disappointing and the French decided to shelve the project. Bokassa then hawked the idea around, even writing to Nixon, who turned it down.

With the accession of Giscard to the presidency in May 1975 the French attitude changed dramatically. Giscard was convinced that Bokassa must be courted through schemes to develop the Empire's natural resources. Moreover, conditions had changed. The price of uranium had rocketed as a result of the oil crisis, and a Swiss company called Alsuirre, whom Bokassa had brought in, had no experience in uranium mining. Giscard designated his cousin, Jacques Giscard d'Estaing, as the key figure to represent French interests in the Empire. Jacques was both financial director of CEA and secretary-general of the Caisse Centrale de Coopération Economique, the financial arm of French African policy. Giscard also fostered a relationship between Bokassa and another relative, Jacques' brother François, director-general of the Banque Française du Commerce Exterieur, and in January last year Bokassa made François a commander of the Order of Operation Bokassa.

But the basic reason for French support for Bokassa is strategic. The three principal centres of French influence in Africa are the coastal states of Senegal, the Ivory Coast and Gabon. The Elysée's political thinkers seek stability above all for the area, and that means insulating French West Africa from what they consider to be the gangrene of Marxism spreading from the east. The Empire, with its immense borders with Zaire, Sudan, Tchad and Cameroon is their ideal buffer state, provided it is run by a staunch anti-communist. Though Bokassa has established relations with Russia, Romania, Yugoslavia and North Korea Giscard's analyists consider this does not represent a fundamental realignment, but is partly an attempt by Bokassa to raise his price for staying in the French camp and partly a simple policy of grabbing aid from wherever he can. The UN, the Common Market, West Germany, Libya and China are all currently giving assistance.

Yet for Bokassa, 23 years a French colonial soldier, France remains an overriding source of inspiration and so the French failure to persuade him to divert his energies towards constructive programmes is all the more lamentable. Instead Bokassa was encouraged to order his gilded coach, throne, sceptre, orb and crown from French jewellers and designers. And when he visits France to stay at his private château at Villevorant in Bologne, French ministers await the arrival of his Caravelle jet (a gift from Pompidou) at Tours airport, and French outriders escort him everywhere.

The poor turn-out of diplomatic representatives at the coronation reflected the fact that most countries were unimpressed. (The official timetable of events, a booklet with gold lettering, began – optimistically – as it turned out – with: 'Arrival of sovereigns, heads of state and of governments and heads of delegations.') Some African rulers, notably President Mobuto of Zaire, tried to discourage Bokassa from going ahead. Only one head of state, the president of Mauritius, turned up. To its credit, the British Foreign Office ordered British diplomats to stay away.

Even so, the damage to black Africa's reputation has been done. Officials at the numerous international agencies in Bangui, trying to grapple with the Empire's enormous problems, are dismayed. As one World Bank official said dejectedly: 'After this how are we going to persuade industrialised nations to give more to the developing world?'

Bangui

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Stuart Holland

Economic Totems & Political Taboos

Ten years ago our economic problem was focused on the exchange rate. Freud, rather than Marx, might have explained the neurosis: sterling totem and devaluation taboo. Since then, however, old orthodoxies have crashed around us. Sterling depreciated by as much as two thirds relative to the German mark, without either national bankruptcy or export-led growth. Recently we have seen the Government concerned not by devaluation, but by the revaluation prompted through North Sea oil and a new strength for sterling. Now, it seems, our totems are different. The mixed economy, which for 30 years has been considered a flexible frontier between the public and private sectors, has suddenly become a dividing line between those who claim to defend our political freedoms and others who warn of the Gulag Archipelago. Such taboos of the post-war period as high unemployment have been discarded by those who appear to think that labour must bear the cost of capital's present crisis.

Meanwhile, the Government has no effective pay policy. Having squandered the two-year deal of the Social Contract, it appears to think that if at first you don't succeed with voluntary policies, you have no choice but to fail and fail again with statutory controls. The wealth tax which was to have 'swinged the rich' – and could have created a climate for negotiated wage restraint – has been sacrificed on the altar of the CBI to appease the old gods of business confidence. On top of which, the Government has launched a series of public expenditure cuts which are generally recognised to have been both counter-effective and unnecessary. Seizing the IMF with open arms 12 months ago, it now finds that – thanks to North Sea oil – it can afford reflation. But while the cuts so far have thrown housing, health and education into crisis, and increased the total unemployed, the Government is concentrating reflation on tax cuts and private spending – on Tory lines – rather than public spending and the welfare state.

In the short term, unemployment has just dropped with the absorption of many school-leavers. But it still is round a million more than the peaks of unemployed in the 25 years following the war. Some 2 million jobs have disappeared from industry over the last ten years, while net manufacturing investment has fallen to a third of its 1970 level. Private sector bankruptcies have trebled in three years, concentrated in small business and threatening a Poujadist backlash which could be exploited either by the Tories or the National Front.

Some Government paladins claim that Labour has carried through four fifths of its programme since 1974. But, without investment or sustained demand, there is neither lift nor momentum to the economy. The Government's economic strategy may be beautiful to its beholders, preserving the present mix in the economy and founded in moderation. But it lacks either the sting or the magic of the bumble-bee. Designed for take-off into sustained flight, it stays stubbornly stuck to the ground. Besides, in real terms, the Government's strategy is double-speak. While the Labour Party envisaged harnessing the power of big business through new forms of public enterprise, planning and social control, the Government's strategy amounts to placating capital and restraining labour. This is shown by the contrast between wages restraint and investment and profit subsidies.

Through two years of the Social Contract, real wages decreased by about 10 per cent. During the three years since November 1974, the Government through one measure alone – tax relief on stock appreciation – has handed some £4,000m. to the private sector. This is not only more than the total IMF loan last year, but equivalent to £4m. a day or nearly £3,000 a minute. Overall, public subsidy of the private sector is now so massive that only about one tenth of £20,000m. tax on income and capital comes from companies. The rest, as we might sometimes have guessed, comes from individuals and the personal tax sector. With business hardly taxed and unemployment high, it is scarcely surprising that there should be a fiscal crisis of state and public spending. Waiting, hoping and granting yet more subsidy to capital will only heighten such a crisis.

Of course, the British Government is not alone in its economic paralysis. According to one headline (*Guardian* 6 December) 'Stagflation still baffles EEC leaders'. But they still seem to think that all was for the best in most of the managed economies until the sheikhs threw an oil slick on their prospects in 1973. While they admit to a certain 'over-adjustment' in economic steering, and lament the fact that most of their economies came off the road to 'sustained growth', few seem to realise that the road itself was coming to an end before the oil price increases. In West Germany, allegedly the economy which is going to haul us all out of recession, investment slumped – as in Britain – way before the OPEC price rises. It fell from 6 per cent a year in the early Sixties to 0.2 per cent a year between 1970 and 1974. Moreover, registered unemployment would be higher in Germany than in Britain today – at around 1.7 million – if two thirds of a million 'guest workers' had outstayed their invitations rather than returned to their own countries since 1973. Overall, it has been estimated that unemployment in the OECD countries is currently set to rise from 15 to 18 million.

Such long-term trends on investment and employment are neither acts of God nor accidents of sheikhdom. In large part they were implicit in the post-war recovery of the developed countries. The consumer boom of the Fifties contained the seeds of consumer saturation. Technical progress meant technological unemployment, as machines displaced workers. The rise of entirely new industries applying wartime innovations to peacetime use has not been followed by a further wave of industries absorbing the new unemployed. If we are to overcome such long-term factors in the current crisis it cannot be through a return to orthodoxies which vainly try to repeat the past. What we need are new perspectives for a socialised mode of development, based on admission of new roles for public enterprise, democratic planning and the public sector.

For example, consumer saturation could in principle be overcome through a redistribution of income. Clearly the poor, the less skilled and the unemployed have fewer goods or spend less than the better-off. But redistribution of income runs into problems in a capitalist mode of production, based on income differentials. In the present mixed economy, business maintains that it cannot invest or produce without greater incentives for management. Similarly, technical progress – which should be a boon for any rationally organised society – is a bane for labour under a capitalist mode of production when its social costs are imposed on those whom it unemploys, rather than shared or distributed through society as a whole. It is opposed by workers in the mines, steel or textiles because of their real fear of permanent unemployment. Besides, technical progress and unemployment means a further contraction of demand unless the Government intervenes to sustain consumption through public spending. In itself, this is not so radical. After all, Keynes stressed that the miners in 1926 were right to resist wage cuts, since they would reduce demand and deepen the depression. But, in practice, to transcend the current crisis and transform the nature of technical progress we need new forms of planning for a structural, spatial and social redistribution of both employment and income.

The redistribution of jobs must take account of the trend to structural unemployment. There is no evidence on the horizon of a feasible return to full employment of the post-war variety, with 40 hours a week plus overtime for most, and jobs for all save the frictionally unemployed. The 35-hour or four-day week should become a government priority. On the other hand, this should not be four days' work for four days' pay, or a cosmetic redefinition of unemployment, with falling wages and falling demand. Skill bottlenecks and a lack of

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key workers in some industries would mean a continuing difference between working hours in different sectors of industry and services. Pay must be maintained in the interim, and in many cases increased, to overcome the trend to under-consumption through technological unemployment.

In effect, the target of a four-day week for five days' pay should be related to negotiation of structural change in the distribution of employment. This in itself implies a redistribution of jobs – between different regions and areas. The Government has declared a new programme for the inner cities, based on job creation. But already it has a million square feet of unoccupied space in more than 130 empty 'advance factories' in the regions. There is no impending job boom about to fill them. Only redistribution of employment, related to new regional and urban planning, can cope with the problem.

In turn, the redistribution of employment must be related to a social redistribution of income. There is no lack of productive capacity or technology in the British economy. What is lacking is the demand to employ it. But the scale of technological unemployment now on the agenda means that we must think beyond the 'safety net' framework of social income transfers. It is no longer specific 'casualties' of industrial society who have to be embraced by the welfare state. In this crisis the bell tolls for us all.

Social redistribution of income is possible with rationalised and raised productivity. But the gains from such feasible increases in productivity should also be distributed in the form of social services – in housing, health, education and transport – of a kind which have formed the basis of the post-war welfare state. Recovered output in the productive sectors of industry could both cover costs and re-establish public income through taxation for social distribution. For instance, it has been estimated by Paul Ormerod of the National Institute that the whole of the public sector borrowing requirement this year has been due to deflation of demand and taxable income. Planned reflation could reverse this.

Such planning clearly would differ from Keynesian intervention. For one thing, it would involve redistribution of jobs and pay rather than just changing their overall level relative to output and capacity. It also would differ from capitalist planning in the sense that negotiation of such fundamental change would itself involve new social and economic relations, rather than vainly trying to make the prevailing system work through incentives to capital. Instead of relying on private investment as the driving force for investment and output, public enterprise would need to play an extended and leading role. Through key sectors in crisis, in manufacturing and construction, this should mean an extension of intervention on the lines of a reformed National Enterprise Board, a National Construction Corporation and a Cooperative Development Agency with teeth.

It also should involve the obligatory planning agreements in the big league firms for which Jack Jones recently called, following Labour Party and TUC conference majorities through the Seventies. At present the Government is offering precisely the reverse, backing away from the concept of signed tripartite agreements between management, unions and government into a bipartite formula between government and management alone.

Clearly mandarins and ministers shrink from major change. Some see only a thin pink line between new state intervention and Stalinism, fearing that Benn tomorrow may mean Beria in 1984. Others in the Labour movement hesitate to change the mix in the economy through dread of corporatism. Yet such fears are misplaced. Both Stalinism and corporatism in its fascist variants in Italy or Spain meant breaking the power of trade unions and incorporating political parties into a unitary state. Neither prospect is on the political agenda here today. Britain is still very much a plural political society. Parties may have lost much of their countervailing power over governments, and unions are not so powerful as the CBI imagines. But both parties and unions represent independent centres of power capable of challenging government excess.

Further, no technocratic or corporatist conspiracy in the alleged public interest could impose the change envisaged from Whitehall on the people. The issue of a 35-hour week and equalised employment alone would involve massive negotiation and debate between unions, parties, pressure groups and governments, spanning far more than one parliament, and subject to electoral challenge or support.

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	1977	1976
Profit before Interest and Taxation	**£15,366,000**	£12,536,000
Profit before Taxation	**£11,669,000**	£9,544,000
Funds Employed	**£80,177,000**	£73,051,000

Dividends per Ordinary Share

Interim—	**0.656 p**	0.656 p
Proposed Final—	**2.744 p**	2.670 p
Total for the year–	**3.400 p**	3.326 p
Dividend Cover	**2.31 times**	2.15 times
Earnings per Ordinary Share	**8.03 p**	7.22 p

Analysis by Principal Activities	% Profit Contribution	
Engineering	**61**	64
Freight, Transport and Storage	**23**	25
Commodity Trading	**5**	3
Vehicle Distribution	**6**	6
Agriculture	**5**	2
	100	100

Analysis by Territories	% Profit Contribution	
United Kingdom	**16**	14
Southern Africa	**68**	81
East and Central Africa	**20**	16
Europe, N. & S. America & Australasia	**(4)**	(11)
	100	100

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Apart from which, much of the mixed economy debate is founded on economic myth. The pattern of existing public ownership in Western Europe is virtually uniform, concentrated in basic industries and services, whether the government is Left, Right or Centre. Also, while public spending at present accounts for some half of total expenditure, public enterprise represents only about a seventh of total output. Even a doubling of the share of public enterprise in total output would still mean more than two thirds of output being commanded by private enterprise: i.e. a remixed rather than a virtually unmixed form of economy.

In short, whatever the subconscious anxieties of those who fear new roles for public enterprise and public spending, there is no point in moving from the totems of yesterday to new taboos today, replacing defence of an exchange rate with insistence on the present mix in the economy. If some members of the Government cannot consider a new mode of development, with new forms of socialisation, their implicit conservatism is likely to promote the success of those who want capitalism with a less caring face.

Mary Morgan

Learning to Live Without Fuel

As in these bleak winter months the North Sea pours in its power and warmth to our homes, Energy Secretary Tony Benn might well contemplate our own 'yonder peassant'. There are many of them in this country and they were most succinctly dismissed in a recent report from a London Authority Social Services Department. In a sentence of chilling import they commented: 'Some people are learning to live without fuel.' What this laconic euphemism really means is that, at the last count in March of this year, there were 38,951 homes without gas and 103,941 homes without electricity.

We can safely assume that these are the homes of poor people. In this month last year the fuel industries published a Code of Practice which was designed to protect the consumer from 'hardship caused by fuel disconnection'. It is unlikely that the Government and fuel boards would have been impelled to such a step through a concern to protect the non-paying consumer from the consequences of his own moral laxity. Quite apart from the need for compassion to old age pensioners at fatal risk from hypothermia, and small children wheezing in unheated rooms, fuel costs were themselves a political embarrassment. We have, after all, a great number of people, sick, unemployed, single parent families, living off the state – 5 million of them. The code would look after them.

Briefly – for to understand the implementation of incomes maintenance policy is like entering the Minotaur's cave blindfold – the code set out a number of schemes relying on the tripartite collaboration of the fuel boards, the Supplementary Benefits Commission and the Social Services Departments of local authorities. The consumer threatened with disconnection could fall back on them, if he could prove that to be cut off from gas or electricity would cause him hardship. Not difficult, you might think. If the consumer happens to be 'a claimant', that is to say a beneficiary of supplementary benefit, he can *request* (I quote the verb from the Code) either an exceptional needs grant to pay his bill or, alternatively, to be 'put on fuel direct'. This means that each week a certain amount plus 50p towards his arrears is deducted from his benefit and paid directly to the fuel board involved. If the consumer happens to have a child under five he is advised to inform the social services department of his local authority in case the hardship caused by fuel disconnection might lead to the need of the child being taken into care. In which case, the social services might countenance cash payment under Section 1 of the Children and Young Person's Act to prevent this. From either agency the fuel boards themselves will accept the decision whether or not disconnection will or will not cause hardship and proceed accordingly.

Consider the case of Mrs Peel. Every night at 8.30 p.m. Mrs Peel blows out the candles in her Islington flat and she and her 14-year-old son, Peter, go to bed. She says it is less depressing than sitting there staring at each other. Until a few weeks ago Peter used to read in bed but his mother stopped that after the night he fell asleep over his book and woke to find his bed on fire from the toppled candle. It is over three months since they started living like this, three months since they were disconnected for non-payment of an electricity bill for £300.

Mrs Peel should not be living without electricity. She is caught in the crossfire not only of inept bureaucracy but of warring philosophies. Anyone knowing anything of the miasmic process which determine the lives of the poor could have warned the Government of the vain expectation of any workable synthesis between the three agencies concerned. That between social work philosophy, income maintenance policy as implemented by the Supplementary Benefits Commission and hard business practice would take more than the goodwill of King Wenceslas to achieve. Let us compare their own public *data* on their roles. First from the Supplementary Benefits Commission:

> recurring difficulties over fuel bills sometimes means that the family is bad at managing its money rather than it has too little and this may be attributed to social and personal problems. The Commission accordingly, where they receive applications for emergency payments may refer to the Social Services Department cases where it becomes clear seem symptomatic of general difficulties. Exit *claimant*. Enter *client*.

But in 'Cash Code For Social Workers' published by the social workers union BASWA discussing the use of Section 1, we read:

> These powers have sometimes been exploited by income maintenance services who it would seem have seen this facility as a way of exporting their 'problem' cases to the social services department on the assumption that anyone who cannot cope on the state level of maintenance must be a bad manager and thus in need of social work attention as a condition for cash help that might be given, Social work clients are being selected by the policies of the electricity boards and the individual is being forced to accept an 'inadequate' label in order to get what is self-evident he needs.

How does Mrs Peel excuse herself being a 'bad manager'? Perhaps she could plead that her sudden widowhood created 'social and personal problems'. Not, of course, that £24 a week to live on is 'too little money'. A year ago, when her bill was £90 and she was threatened with disconnection, Mrs Peel 'requested' her local supplementary benefits office to help her by means of the 'fuel direct scheme'. Inexplicably, this was denied her. Had it not been, by now Mrs Peel would have paid off a third of her arrears and her son would not be so depressed and ashamed that he was refusing to go to school. Unless, and it will take a miracle, she wins her appeal to the tribunal for a grant. Mrs Peel could be without electricity for ever, no light, no hot water, no television, folding her washing instead of ironing it, bathing in the public baths. She cannot bear the thought of Christmas dinner by candle-light.

'Fuel direct' might seem better than disconnection. It's just that you eat less. Poor people have little choice of heating systems and many are entirely dependent on electricity. Remember when electricity was cheap to install and councils did so in thousands of their houses and flats? In a letter accompanying the National Consumer Council's report to the Energy Secretary last week Michael Shanks, their chairman wrote: 'The system of deducting fuel payments from supplementary benefit, while preventing disconnection can result in families being left without money to live on.'

Inevitably the Supplementary Benefits Commission gets all the stick, attracting opprobium for what seems unconscionable meanness. When, for example, Anne Johnson today meets its chairman, David Donnison, to explain the impossibility of bringing up two children on £19.90 a week, which is all she has left after rent and a 'fuel direct' payment of £5.50, he is bound to appear first cousin to Scrooge. But who would care to be the arbiter between fuel or food for five million people? It must be the least happy of all the Commission's unhappy roles. Perhaps the flint hearts should be more precisely identified in the cabinet. While they conduct their grand and comforting strategic debates on the providence of North Sea fuel they also place their new Poor Law Commissioners in the wretched position of deciding whether people should nearly freeze or nearly starve. Perhaps it is they who should try 'learning to live without fuel'.

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London Diary

☐ Some months ago I felt reluctant to sign an anti-National Front manifesto because I thought that by calling the Front's thuggish adherents 'Nazis' it was giving them a sensational importance they don't deserve. I'm not sure that I'm right, but I still have a horrible feeling that the admirable intentions of the Labour Party's anti-Front party political broadcast are misjudged. The enemies of your parents', or grandparents', wars have a way of achieving historical glamour, and to your average Millwall Boot Boy pictures of goose-stepping storm-troopers may well prove a stimulating addition to the Front's attractions, and no turn off. This is the thought which brings a cold chill of horror at the sight of a swastika on the jacket of a girl punk-rocker, her face made up and her hair cropped like a Belsen victim.

☐ The Fisher Report on the Confait murder strikes deep at the heart of our complacent belief that our criminal procedures are infallible. How did Colin Lattimore, an 18-year-old of admittedly diminished responsibility, come to confess to a murder he couldn't possibly have committed, and how was it that the police and prosecution failed to clearly establish the time of death which would have proved his innocence? Harry Fisher's report may be a disappointment to the champions of two of the accused boys, whom he finds guilty on the balance of probabilities; but his recommendations are entirely salutary. He would compel the police to inform suspects of their right to communicate with a solicitor and see that the Judges' Rules are actually enforced by excluding confessions wrongly obtained. The uneasy question remains – who will ensure that the police and prosecuting counsel will ask the questions which are inconsistent with their view of the case, and insist on answers? However this report is received, I devoutly hope that its lucid account of how a criminal trial can go hopelessly wrong will silence all agitation for the return of the death penalty.

☐ I have always been glad to visit foreign trials on behalf of Amnesty International, although admittedly I went to such relatively law-abiding places as Nigeria and Israel where the miscarriages of justice seemed more fearsome over lunch in the Italian restaurant near the Amnesty office than they did on the spot. Amnesty is to be congratulated on its deserved Nobel Prize. Its report on the atrocities of various governments does provoke thought on the selective nature of our protests: although I see no basis on which to accuse Amnesty of being modish. It seems that we get the greatest pleasure out of denouncing our own kind and that those few fortunates who live in affluent and democratic societies get their greatest emotional kick from protesting against the outrage in which their own country is in some way involved. There is a particular thrill of courage at being able to disagree (perfectly safely of course) with your own government. How else can one explain the fact that all the American marchers and demonstrators against the Vietnam war are silent at the fact that over 200,000 Vietnamese are now held in 're-education' camps? And those who protest loudest (and correctly) against the British Army's questioning of IRA suspects are often modestly silent about the habit that appalling organisation has of removing knee caps with Black and Decker drills, and oblivious to the horrifying prospect of government by Provos. Selectivity of protest in no way excuses the popular targets, South Africa in particular; but it is perhaps out of a deep laid and justified sense of guilt that the white democratic protester tends to chant: 'My country, or my colour, wrong if possible: and the rest of the world probably okay.'

☐ A word of warning to lawyers travelling on Amnesty business. A barrister friend, following a trial in an African country, received a cable from his clerk telling him of his next week's work in England. After this he noticed he was being followed everywhere by the local Special Branch and was finally hauled in to explain matters to the chief of police. The cable had read: 'Murder fixed for Wednesday. Yours Eric.'

☐ It's good news that Mr Egon Ronay is going to take over the organisation of some of our filthy motorway cafés, and I hope he will use as his model the beautiful Motta Bars on the Autostrada del Sole, with gleaming counters, pretty crockery and shops that sell local wine and cheeses, things to keep kids quiet in the car and every known form of biscuit. It's extraordinary how the 'image' of the English and the Italians has been reversed since my childhood, when we were supposed to be a race with clean hands and gleaming seaside hotels, whereas in Italy you couldn't drink the water or go to the loo without risk of dysentery or worse. Now Italian men busy around in freshly laundered shirts and impeccable suits, while the English are addicted to peasant clothing and go short on the Harpic. Perhaps, by way of compensation, we shall start to earn a reputation as torrid lovers and addicts of Puccini.

☐ Haydn as an old man, snoozing by the fire in some German castle, described how he fell asleep, dreamt that he was attending a performance of *The Marriage of Figaro* and awoke with a feeling of indescribable happiness. That dream was ours this week when the octogenarian Karl Böhm conducted that perfect opera of comedy, class war and reconciliation, Covent Garden, which gets only a quarter of the subsidy of the Paris Opera, desperately needs to build scene docks (at the moment the sets are stored far away and at great expense) and to improve the backstage accommodation which I hear makes the average motorway café look like the Palace of Versailles. I have a dreadful fear that opera will become some vanished memory with which we shall bore our grandchildren, like gobstoppers, chamber pots and eating rabbit, only patronised by the fashionable few. A petrol pump attendant somewhere just west of Hanger Lane told me he remembered my face. I wondered if it was on the telly, some predictable debate on the permissive society; but no, it seemed I had sat behind him at *Aida* in the summer. He gave me a brief snatch of the Priests' Chorus as the gallons clicked away.

☐ Lady Spencer-Churchill seems to have been a person of great charm, and the only Conservative Prime Minister's wife to have received the Soviet Order of the Red Banner of Labour. Perhaps now the great Graham Sutherland portrait of her husband, which has been so long hidden, may be restored to the light of day?

☐ I am always grateful for new additions to the language. I am also an addict of *New Faces*, a TV programme in which unknown groups of strikingly little talent are greeted with strange rapture by a panel of persons apparently well known in the recording world and a man who announces police messages. Their system of marking can be applied easily to politics or art: for instance Mr Merlyn Rees would score nought for presentation, Mr Wilson little for content but I might go to nine for entertainment value, and so on. This week Mr Micky Most, the most aggressive of the panellists who peers out from his blown hairdo with a look of wary hostility, was talking about 'M.O.R.' music which lacked 'Factor X, I mean charisma'. Mr Most speaks for us all surveying the contemporary scene: pretty Middle Of the Road, I would say, notably deficient in Factor X this Christmas.

John Mortimer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Incensed when he found woman in bed with man. Estranged lover slashed teddy bear with a knife. – *Lymington Times* (W. Pugh)

☐ A botanist, after attending a party, went into a public lavatory cubicle and was reading a chess book when a plainclothes policeman burst in and arrested him on a charge of gross indecency, Mr Offenbach said. The police urged the botanist to plead guilty at the magistrates' court 'to get it over with and avoid publicity'. – *Hampstead and Highgate Express* (K. Robinson).

☐ The ultimate Xmas present. Exclusive Norwegian Polar bear skins with head. Silk lined. Now very rare. Excellent investment. Small ad in *The Times* Christmas Guide. (P. Harrison)

☐ The prevailing attitude was put by one boilermaker: 'They can have parity if they want, but we shall have another increase.' – *Guardian* (Laune Elks)

☐ Eating out at English restaurants should be regarded as a hazard rather than a pleasure, said Mr James Clancey, vice-president of the Environment Health Association. – *Southend Evening Echo* (H. R. Baker)

☐ Schools in a London borough are replacing black and white television sets for colour – to help combat children's boredom. – *Evening News* (Joan Buckley)

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University Forum

Glen Davies*

Behind the Scenes

Most student journalism wobbles. It wavers between being esoteric and banal, between being over-written and under-researched. But just occasionally it justifies itself. And once in a blue moon, it gets the sort of chance which would never offer itself to professional journalists.

In September, *Isis*, the Oxford undergraduate magazine, made the dailies when Holywell Press, under pressure from their workers' union, the NGA, refused to continue to print the magazine unless lay-out was done by NGA members. *Isis* refused, and turned regretfully to a non-union printer. But at the same time, the editors received a telephone call from the Self-Help Organisation, offering to set up a flat-bed printing press for *Isis* in Oxford. Up to that time, practically nothing was known about Self-Help, save that, as a memo sent to national newspapers this year claims, it is dedicated to a 'campaign against trade union tyranny', that it may have a large-scale printing press 'standing ready day and night to publish a daily newspaper in the event of a national strike', and that its only public figure was its spokesman, the dowager Lady Birdwood.

As far as Self-Help were concerned, *Isis* was still the sort of 'Establishment' publication it had been at the turn of the century. A look at almost any recent issue would have shown otherwise. There was never any question of *Isis* accepting the Self-Help offer; instead, an *Isis* journalist was able to meet Lady Birdwood, and a man who called himself 'Campbell', on a number of occasions, apparently to negotiate, in fact to infiltrate. In June, at the height of the Trust House Forte union-recognition dispute at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford, Self-Help held a picket-breaking meeting there. Outside, police clashed with demonstrators and there were 38 arrests. Inside, the atmosphere was no less heated, with Lady Birdwood, chairing the meeting, severely criticised for the continuing secrecy, even for members, of the organisation's leaders.

Investigations showed that Self-Help is run by a triumvirate of Lady Birdwood (who has appeared at rallies involving the notorious 'Column 88', attended meetings limited to members of the National Front, and describes herself as 'interested in immigration'), Air Vice-Marshal Donald Bennett (distinguished war-hero, ex-Liberal MP, who sold Blackbush Airport for a reputed £4m.), and the man who met *Isis* under the assumed name of Campbell. He was, in fact, none other than Edward Martell, a prominent anti-unionist of the Sixties, who vanished after his bankruptcy in 1967.

Martell is in many ways a disappointed man. Beginning in public life as a respected figure, he contested Hendon North for the Liberal Party in 1950, raising £25,000 to safeguard the party's electoral deposits. In 1954 he demonstrated his brilliance as a fund-raiser, running the 'Winston Churchill Birthday Fund'. In 1956 he set up the 'Anti-Socialist Front' and in 1960 established a newspaper, the *New Daily*, to be run as an openshop. These organisations formed the core of his Freedom Group, in which Donald Bennett was also involved. In 1963, his 'Free Press Society' bought a printing works at Stoke Newington, London, and he joined the Conservative Party as 'the only remaining bulwark against further socialist and communist erosion'. He is still a member, although he describes Heath as 'a socialist' and Thatcher as 'a puppet, only interested in office'. After the 1964 election, when the new Labour Government proposed legislation forcing companies to declare contributions to political groups, his backing disappeared overnight, and amid a blaze of publicity he wound up in the Bankruptcy Court with debts of £179,634 (many of which were unsecured loans from Freedom Group supporters) and no assets. He went bankrupt on 12 December 1967, from which he has just been discharged under the ten-year moratorium imposed under the recent Finance Act.

Martell now lives in Worthing with his wife, Ethel, who is a director of George Street Minimarket Ltd, one of the companies set up to run the Freedom Group's business interests after Martell's bankruptcy. Until recently, the company paid rates on a bookshop at 87 George Street, London, which is used as an office by Self-Help, and from which copies of the Self-Help newspaper *British Gazette* (in format very similar to the *New Daily*) are mailed out. A sister company, West End Minimarkets Ltd, pays rates on various other properties in the area. Both George Street addresses are used by the General Service Agency, another company to grow out of the Freedom Group. Rates on 87 George Street are now paid by C. A. White, of Folkestone, to which port one Self-Help messenger makes regular trips.

Self-Help has been written off by many as simply yet another lunatic-fringe right-wing group. Certainly much of their support is from the maiden aunts and retired colonels of the South Coast, which has been described as Britain's Costa Geriatrica. Martell is given to making extravagant claims, for example that Self-Help have printed an issue of the *TV Times* (in which there is no truth whatsoever). Separating the wheat from the chaff is problematic, but it certainly seems that the scope of Self-Help's operations is much wider than has previously been thought.

It has been established that Self-Help has a network of offices, including George Street, and a number of accommodation addresses, including 30 Baker Street. They also claim to have been involved in the Grunwick dispute and the Tower Hamlets lift strike. Apart from their attempt to set up a press for *Isis*, they have many supporters in Oxford, which is one of the country's centres for printing, and may already have gained a foothold in the student press in Cambridge. The boasted newspaper press capable of producing 3 million copies every 24 hours has yet to be found; it now seems certain, however, that it does exist, probably nearer to 12 miles from London than the 60 their publicity claims. Self-Help also has offset-litho facilities, which Martell describes as 'across the water'. In addition, they make use of the 'White Eagle Press', at 2 Vine Lane, London SE1, a trade union works which prints such expatriate publications as the *Polish Gazette*, not only for their own pamphlets, but also those put out by other right-wing organisations, handled by Self-Help on a commercial basis. They may also have the use of a print-works on the South Coast at night.

At times Self-Help's *modus operandi* seems ludicrous, but it is based on solid common sense. The employees at the White Eagle Press are immigrants, without a good grasp of the English language. Self-Help uses pensioners to carry messages around, to take advantage of cheap fares. David Doig, one of these, is also nearly deaf. The organisation works on a classic 'cell' principle, almost self-consciously clandestine. Donations are made in cash; on one occasion, Doig was seen returning to George Street with a plastic bag full of pound notes. Quite who supports Self-Help financially is unclear, but in a number of taped telephone conversations and witnessed meetings, Martell did offer the names of Sir Charles Forte and Blackwell's, the famous Oxford booksellers. Blackwell's have confirmed that they were approached by Self-Help over *Isis*, but whether or not they have in fact made what Martell describes as 'very sizeable donations to our cause' is doubtful.

Self-Help exists 'to take the sting out of any local or national strikes'; as Lady Birdwood said on one occasion, 'Of course we're dying for a national strike, it would make our organisation overnight'. So supporters are encouraged to lay in stocks of tinned food and candles, and Self-Help maintains a file of supporters' skills which would enable Self-Help to 'protect the maintenance of communication between Government and people'.

Until a general strike, Self-Help can only wait and prepare. They are compiling a register of 'industrial troublemakers and agitators'. And they helped, in 1975, to set up the National Association for Freedom; Ross McWhirter was arranging the major Self-Help press at the time of his assassination. Recently, NAFF have dissociated themselves from Self-Help. But, whereas NAFF have officially advised George Ward at Grunwick, it was Self-Help who ran 'Operation Pony Express'. It now looks as if they are aspiring to become the Provisional Wing of NAFF.

Glen Davies is reading English at Balliol College, Oxford.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Tolstoy's Aunt on Serious Charge

On the night before my parents' wedding on 19 April (Primrose Day, and my father's birthday), 1906, an unforeseen and world-shattering event took place that must have seemed at the time an extremely ill omen for a placid and contented married life. I am referring, of course, to the great San Francisco earthquake and fire, with the resulting appalling loss of life, the news of which, feverishly reported in the pages of the *Morning Post*, reached them during the first hours of their honeymoon at Lynmouth and provided my mother, I assume, with her second severe shock of the day. But what of the omen? How did things turn out, you ask? Instant separation? Divorce before the year was out? Nothing of the sort. California is a long way from North Devon and the disastrous seismic waves, both actual and psychological, had petered out long before they reached that rocky shore. The marriage was basically a very happy one and it endured, though whether or not my subsequent appearance is also to be considered as a calamitous natural disaster is up to you. Anyway, like it or not, I'm pressing on and I hope to be troubling the Great Scorer for a while yet with a few more wristy snicks through the covers, a leg glide or two to 'point', or whatever seems appropriate.

The year 1906 was full of other, milder surprises, some of them quite pleasant (opening of the Simplon tunnel to railway traffic) and for a heartening *coup d'oeil* at what was afoot one hastens automatically to the bound volumes of that delightful weekly illustrated magazine, *The Sketch*, where one finds oneself instantly knee-deep in crowded happenings, excitements everywhere. Hamburg fire-fighters, we discover, are now zooming into action on motorised tricycles at a speed said to be not far short of 15 m.p.h. The oldest lady in Japan, thought to be at least 110, has been recently provided with a copper ear-trumpet and, misunderstanding its purpose, struck gamely out with it at anybody rash enough to attempt a chat. A Tottenham road-menders' shelter is being used (and don't ask me why) as a changing-room by lady hockey-players. A vendor of 'revolutionary buttons' (made in Birmingham, it says), has been recklessly vending away in the streets of what was then a pleasingly tolerant St Petersburg, causing raised eyebrows rather than raised fists. A grey-haired Latvian finds his hair turning bright red during moments of emotional disturbance, and a prominent Russian ballerina has sued a quack dimple-cutter for the sum of 1500 roubles for cutting two faulty and subsequently septic dimples in her knees (out of *Swan Lake* for weeks).

With photographic reproduction in newspapers still in its fairly early stages and something of an attractive novelty, almost anything was adjudged to be fully snap-worthy. Here, scratching away for dear life and wildly cackling from time to time, is the picked team of loyal Buff Orpingtons who are supplying the Cambridge boatrace crew with eggs (40 required for breakfast alone, if you please, and a real challenge to our feathered friends). There, and how devilishly ingenious it is, is a police speed-trap consisting of a posse of stop-watched bobbies cunningly concealed in a mobile artificial hedge on the Birnam Wood principle. Occasionally one can feast the eyes on a more peaceful subject – Stoke Poges from the south, Chalfont St Giles from the east, Slough at dusk, and 'early morning in the W. H. Smith employees' rest room' (snore, snore) – only to be once more eager and alert to drink in a very sulky looking lady who turns out to be the grumpy Archduchess Clotilde (financially ruined by unwise speculation on the Hungarian *bourse*), together with bold Esther McEwan, a Scottish lassie of 15 who, disguised as a boy, worked in a mine and went on three sea voyages before her sex was discovered. Whether or not she then thought oh what the hell and signed on for a fourth sea voyage we are not told.

Certain of our newspapers, ever anxious to intrigue and stimulate the readers, daily supply information concerning interesting anniversaries. I find it nothing but jolly to learn over the bacon and egg that on this very date 160 years ago Garibaldi went to the dentist for the first time or that in 1861 Tolstoy's aunt was arrested for shop-lifting, found guilty and sentenced to 30 whacks with the dreaded knout (I only wish they would try this out in Oxford Street on those middle-eastern ladies who, when apprehended, are found to have £5,894 in their bags). My only difficulty is that I can so seldom remember, even if I ever knew, the precise circumstances of the event selected from history's brimming pages, after who knows what anxious deliberations, for Fleet Street canonisation. I should, for example, be sorry to be asked, in the general knowledge section of *Mastermind* (specialist subject: English Musical Comedy, 1924-1954), for details of the Diet of Worms, beyond announcing the fact, surely plain to all, that as a collection of words it outstandingly lacks euphonious charm.

Apart from the eleven lovely years of AD 8 to AD 19 (Death of Horace, Death of Ovid, Death of Livy, Death of Virgil, all entirely welcome removals, woefully delayed in some cases and far too seldom celebrated by the *Daily Telegraph*), the anniversaries picked out usually merely make one rather glad, for once, to be in the here and now. Eighty or so years ago, you could hardly hear yourself speak for the din from the loud explosions of infernal machines, busily dispatching various foreign royalties, together with – and what a lesson for rubber-necks – those sometimes referred to as 'curious bystanders'. The Shah of Persia went pop in 1896, ditto King Humbert four years later. The really spectacular assassinations of Czar Alexander II, the King of Portugal (bowling along, carefree as you like, through Lisbon) and King George of Greece were put utterly in the shade, and here the English record is sadly poor, by the entire royal family of Serbia who all went up together in one great big glorious bang. In the middle of all this carnage, the invention of the Remington type-writer provided a sorely needed solace for all.

Perhaps there is, after all, just a little to be said in favour of living round about BC 282 (Death of Euclid). Building was flourishing (the Great Wall of China was going up) and, for excitement and spectacle, the Gauls could always be counted on to turn unexpectedly up and sack something. For lively reading there was the Indian London Library, and the invention of the magnetic needle could tell you how to get there (you could take in the Temple of Luxor on the way). It is true that the sun seems to have eclipsed itself more frequently than it does now, and I dare say the nights were chilly, but with wall to wall rush flooring, all-purpose house-coats in dyed Persian lamb, and handfuls of slow-burning camel's dung thrust into the Kosi-glow, one could have made oneself just as snug as snug.

Vole 4

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Letters to the Editor

The Bakke Case

Sir, The recent case on appeal, *Regents of the University of California* v. *Allan Bakke,* has to it the unfortunate side that it does not represent the problem which ought to be solved. The Supreme Court will be asked to solve a very narrow question: whether or not to permit Affirmative Action to function as a viable and constitutionally sanctioned Executive order, and, at the same time, to refuse the admission to medical study of Allan Bakke. Were the case to stop there, one might argue that Bakke should be admitted because the constitutional system of the United States, for the most part, clearly forbids the conferring of privileges, or the revoking of rights, on the grounds of race. There stands, throughout the case, an invisible American creature, and it is that 'creature' which I wish was made visible, and then destroyed. In 1903, writing in the *Harvard Monthly,* William James had a prevision of it, entitling his essay, 'The Ph.D. Octopus', stating that America, even then, was becoming obsessed with educational credentials and with unrealistic educational standards. He lamented that universities were then requiring a faculty member to possess a Ph.D. for most posts. He saw, too, that there was something in the American character that forced it to strive after unreal limits, as if the questing after platonic perfection were the super ego of the pragmatic mind and character, and he warned his countrymen against that platonic vice. Seventy-five years later it is clear that they did not listen to him.

Little observed, too, has been a piece of humane legislation which the United States Congress just revoked because a few American medical schools decided to refuse the federal funds the legislation gave them (funds which they needed and could use) because they would not submit themselves to the directions of the legislation. It was entitled the Health Professions Education Assistance Act. The aim of the legislation was to permit American citizens, who may have studied abroad in non-American medical schools (like Oxford, St Andrews, Cambridge, Heidelberg, McGill, etc.), to be admitted to an American medical school to complete their training, and receive an American medical degree. The only requirement was that the student sit a qualifying examination devised by the federal government; and, if the candidate had been successful, he would gain immediate admittance to an American medical school to complete his clinical training, and thence be awarded his medical degree. The medical Establishment in the United States entered into academic paroxyms. The medical school at Davis (to which Bakke had applied) was one of those which claimed that it would not be dictated to by the Government! Screams were collectively heard that academic freedom was now under attack; these are the same screams which denounce the National Health Service because it is seen to be 'socialistic' or 'communistic' and does not permit a patient to 'choose his own doctor'. This Act did more in one legislative instance to crush the arrogant stronghold that American professional schools have upon American education than any legislation in decades. It now stands defeated, and will be let die in 1978, unless President Carter vetoes the vote of the Senate and House. Carter, a man neither with the talent of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, nor the advisers of John F. Kennedy, will, most likely, approve the bill and let the Act die.

I mention all of this because, looked at with some understanding of the American temper, the *Bakke* case is a study of and in distraction. Americans spend billions of dollars on their educational institutions, and, for the most part, those institutions produce very little, and are extremely inefficient. What needed to be broken was the conservative, stodgy mind which directs American professional schools, and *Bakke* will not do this at all. If the case is decided in favour of the *Regents,* then it will let the status quo remain in its comfortable inefficient state.

Bakke also reveals the essential inhumanity of the American professional system. As a medical candidate for proposed professional study he has been put through a gruesome ordeal, having years of his life wasted (which could have been spent in medical study) by Admissions Officers who were rejecting him, a qualified engineer, because of some undisclosed or unrefined whim about a need to aid the poor and the minorities in the United States. If one looks upon these whims one finds that the poor are only being toyed with politically at present, and that they are being helped little at all, or if at all.

Who can afford the tuitions to most American schools? None but the super-rich. What minority father could pay $12,500 (£6,800) to one of Washington DC's private medical schools and then pay thousands of dollars more for books, room and board, and normal school costs? *Bakke* does not address itself to that problem. The *amicus* brief submitted by Attorney-General Griffin Bell on behalf of the Carter Administration, and against Allan Bakke, is a piece of moral trash. Carter needs an easy 'moral' victory; the American professional schools want to remain invisible (much like Detroit automobile manufacturers); a defeat for Allan Bakke would not only be a crushing blow to the academic hopes of a qualified individual, it would also be a cheap and sleazy moral victory for Carter, and an affirmation for American professional schools that they were bigger both than government and what the American people needed. One can hope only that the United States Supreme Court will reveal the same good sense it showed in *Nixon* v. *The United States,* and let Bakke begin his medical studies at the University of California, a position which the State Supreme Court of California had, in the first place, urged.

J. M. B. CRAWFORD

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Sir, The recent article you published (NS 2 December) on 'reverse discrimination' made the excellent point that such action had better be applied to individuals and not to groups if it is to work. And it was refreshing to see an admission that if discrimination against one group on the basis of race is racist, it is just as racist when applied against another group. Indeed, that is the point Bakke himself is trying to make.

What neither the article nor the subsequent correspondence has mentioned is a point central to this dispute and to the Bakke case itself: if action of this nature can be applied *legally* against any group as such, it needs only a change in the political climate (which these days is notoriously unstable) for the same legality to be turned back against the very group it was meant to favour in the first place. We are then back to something like the race laws in Nazi Germany. That is why those who oppose Bakke on principle are so dreadfully mistaken, in spite of their compassionate good intentions. Of course talented and gifted people in minority groups ought not to be 'wasted', but they should be favoured because they are talented and gifted, not because they are members of some 'disadvantaged' group. There is no such thing as a 'starting line', and no minority group ever 'catches up' *en masse* in the sense of that expression in this controversy. To foster the illusion that such a thing is possible will only arouse expectations that are going to remain frustrated, and so increase bitterness and intensify the very unrest which this propaganda is meant to pacify. This will be matched by a furious sense of injustice in people like Bakke who (correctly) perceive an unjust discrimination against them. It is liable to end with the very change in political climate mentioned above – not merely a backlash, but a legally sanctioned backlash, most hideously dangerous to those minority groups who are clamouring the loudest for this paradoxical action. They had better think very carefully about what they are asking for – and the legislators and judges, one hopes, will think even more carefully before letting them have it.

HERB GREER

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Sir, Mr Ben Whitaker's essay on the Bakke case now pending before the Supreme Court of the United States demonstrates the dangers of commenting upon an internal social issue of a nation with whom one is essentially unfamiliar. The fact is that preferential admissions (or employment) is the correct step to be taken in America at this time. If we must await the arrival of economic justice, as Mr Whitaker proposes, to cure the evil consequences of 200 years of slavery (thanks to English slave traders, I might note) and more than 100 years of institutionalised racial discrimination, we will exacerbate the problem. I'm sure I am as much in favour of economic justice as Mr Whitaker and look forward to its swift arrival, but ask a cross-section of American blacks and other minorities how they feel about putting off the improvement of their immediate economic condition, and I think they will not express very much sympathy for Mr Whitaker's prudence.

As for Mr Whitaker's concern that approval of preferences in admission will adversely affect the quality of medical care, or whatever other professional skill may be involved, that assumes that every doctor and lawyer in practice today is a Lister or a Holmes. A lot of us are just very good, and some of us are very bad. I think the same will be true of minority doctors and lawyers, no matter how they are selected for training.

MELVIN L. WULF

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Sir, Antony Flew, in his condemnation of reverse discrimination (Letters 9 December), seems to think it sufficient to show that such a system is based on racist criteria of selection. But why is there anything necessarily wrong in selecting university students according to race, rather than examination results, age, or their potential? Each criterion presupposes unfairness to those who fail to satisfy its demands, and each criterion is assessed according to public interest. If racist criteria are justified in the public interest (more black doctors), then we can accept reverse discrimination.

As Ronald Dworkin correctly concludes, we only object to racist criteria when they imply disrespect for a race. Reverse discrimination rather implies a healthy respect for whites, who have no need of such assistance to win places at university.

DAVID PANNICK

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Transvaal's Conclusive Evidence

Sir, In R. W. Johnson's article 'South Africa's Inconclusive Election' (NS 9 December) it is properly noted that 'the denial of political rights to blacks in the "white" urban areas is justified by the (ridiculous) contention that they are but temporary sojourners there'. True enough; but the justification of the contention that the blacks are but temporary sojourners is more than just ridiculous: it is quite terrifying in its total dishonesty and cynicism.

For this justification rests on a fraudulently rewritten version of South African history, in which the whites claim that black and white arrived in South Africa at about the same time and (to quote Mr Vorster himself in Parliament 11 years ago): 'The fact that the blacks have only 13 per cent of the land and the whites have the rest is a division decreed by history.'

In fact, South Africa's own archaeologists and historians long ago proved, with the aid of unimpeachable radio-carbon datings, that the Bantu were already in the Transvaal – even right where Johannesburg now stands – at least 600 years before the first white settlement in 1652. At the time of the first black/white confrontations in the 16th century, the blacks already owned and occupied at least half the country, including most of its mineral wealth – some of which they had been mining since the year 960. 'When van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape in 1652, most of South Africa was already occupied by Bantu-speaking people', wrote historian/educationist R. O. Pearse of Natal in *Barrier of Spears* (Timmins, Cape Town, 1974). That this book actually has an approving foreword by a South African cabinet minister speaks volumes about the depths of deception inherent in the entire Bantustan policy, on which the very concept of most of South Africa being 'white South Africa' is based. In fact, there is an ancient Sotho stone city in ruins on the very edge of much later white Johannesburg. Indeed, if anyone is alien in South Africa, it is the whites, not the African blacks. In fact, the Boer untruths on which the entire concept of 'black homelands' – and of territorial apartheid itself – is based is one of the greatest, and certainly the most racist, frauds in human history. That is what apartheid is really all about. The theft of land, concealed by lies.

L. CLARKE

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In R. W. Johnson's article, it was wrongly stated that in the election Mr Vorster's National Party had won 155 parliamentary seats out of 165. This should have read 135 parliamentary seats out of 165. – Ed. NS.

Streaming Spires

Sir, Having been much involved with the debate over admissions to Oxbridge in the *Times Educational Supplement,* I was most interested in Tim Albert's 'Streaming Spires' (NS 9 December). He is right that it is a counsel of despair to seek for an inquiry into the admissions procedure but it is also one of necessity. An inquiry can only be set up if sufficient evidence is presented to the Secretary of State to persuade her that there is a case to look into. I would be most grateful if I could appeal to your readers for any evidence of any injustice of which they have knowledge concerning the admissions procedure of the older universities. I write this letter in the aftermath of a conversation with a pupil with excellent A-levels and the strongest reference from the school who has this morning been rejected by Cambridge. Any help which your readers can give would be much appreciated and I am sure many of them will be very concerned about the apparent injustices of the present system.

JOHN D. MILNER
Head of Sixth Form

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State Handouts

Sir, In his article 'Managing the Mixed Economy' (NS 18 November) Roy Hattersley states that it is not possible to put a figure on the economic loss caused by generations of school leavers drifting into unemployment. In fact, a figure has been put on the cost of lost production and tax revenue through unemployment since 1974. This appears in a recent publication *The Conscript Army – A study of Britain's Unemployed.* The amount is a staggering £20,000m., and it seems reasonable to assume that a fair proportion of this sum relates to the young unemployed.

W. T. HEATH

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Tirez sur le Bouche-Organiste

Sir, I should of stood in bed. Safer to remain the pin-up of *Private Eye,* subject to slings and arrows of outrageous Son of Evelyn, than to be on the receiving end of dead cats hurled by Alastair Forbes. My main purpose was the defence of Janet Flanner – not for her musical comments from Paris and *merci* ever so *beaucoup,* Mr Forbes, for mentioning the work that Darius Milhaud wrote for me – but just for her first-class Parisian reportage, to which I'm sure both Raymond Aron and Cy Sulzberger would say *'chapeau'*.

Oh sure, Uncle Tom Cobb didn't *steal* the style of *Private Eye,* I just think that to label with adjectives, as a political cartoonist labels his target, is a sign of a careless writer, like exclamation points. 'But the *New Yorker,* it is safe to say, is in Britain more usually to be found in Green Rooms than Common Rooms . . .' No, Forbesie, it is *not* safe to say it, not with me around. That kind of intellectual snobbery is *chutzpah* up with which I will not put. You dare to put down the *New Yorker* of Thurber, Benchley, E. B. White, Dorothy Parker, John O'Hara, J. D. Salinger, Edmund Wilson *et al*?

But full marks for calling me 'The Trendy Old-Timer With a Magpie Mind'. Capitals, because I think we may have a hit there, though it fits as it is into 'The Flat Foot Floogie With the Floy Floy'. For a finish I'll bring up the big guns. In *Edmund Wilson's Letters,* this is reprinted:

Janet Flanner
Has a crusty manner
She sits in a bar
Like the St Lazare Gare
And from there she pounds out her
wonderful letters
Which makes us all her eternal debtors

THE NS EDITORSHIP

Applications are invited for the post of Editor of the NEW STATESMAN. Anthony Howard, the present editor, has held the position for nearly six years, since May 1972, and is intending to leave in the spring of next year.

Applications from both men and women should be sent to the General Manager NEW STATESMAN, 10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ to arrive by 12 January 1978.

Finally, Forbes. I am *too* a Thinking Reed Organist and I'll bet my father can beat *your* father.

LARRY ADLER

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The Gould Report

Sir, I don't wish to comment on the debate which followed my reply to Richard Hoggart's article (Letters 11 November) about the Gould report. But since Professor Gould has written in (Letters 18 November), quoting a sentence which was *misprinted* in my letter, I had better set the record right. It was the rights of Marxists and radicals 'to teach and *write*', not 'to teach and vote', which I said were threatened by the Gould campaign; perhaps it should have been 'teach and publish'.

Is this really a fanciful interpretation of Gould? True, Gould allows one or two Marxists a legitimate contribution (Professors Christopher Hill and Eugene Genovese seem to be all right in his book). But the rest of us are swept up into the 'subversive' bag, and attention particularly drawn to our supposed 'appointments' networks' and to our publishing outlets. The whole concoction is then distributed by a noted 'counter-insurgency' body to the press and to people of influence, while a £5 tag is put on the 50-page document to deter any ordinary academics who might want to read it. Are we really to believe that it was not Gould's intention to influence appointments committees and publishers against Marxists and their works? And would not such influence, were it successful, threaten our rights to teach and publish? Are there no honest witch-hunters left?

MARTIN SHAW

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Hull

Dog Meat

Sir, The Vietnamese are not alone in considering dog meat a delicacy (NS 18 November) for despite official prohibition it is still sometimes consumed here by Chinese gourmets, and is believed to have special healing properties. G. N. Wright, in *China, in a series of views displaying the scenery, architecture and social habits of that ancient empire* (London, 1843) describes, in vol. 1, p. 78, a market 'to which the stewards of the noble families of Peking repair to purchase viands for their lords', where butchers were to be seen 'carrying dog's flesh . . . or leading five or six dogs to the slaughter house'. In the Peking area, according to Wright, 'the species of dog most in request is a small spaniel', but here in the South it is said that Chows are preferred, their meat being recommended for the relief of mental strain and insomnia.

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Rabbis' Tale

Sir, Mr Anthony Rudolf (Letters, 9 December) is right to add to John Mortimer's account of the rabbis putting God on trial. But as I recall it, the episode of *The Long Search* which included the story went on to quote a Jewish New York writer as saying that he intended to use the tale in a future novel. 'But in the book,' he said, 'there will be one additional character, a man who takes it upon himself to defend God at the trial. That character will be Satan.'

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

David Caute

UnAmerican Activities

We Must March My Darlings: A Critical Decade by DIANA TRILLING *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich* £6.50

About a year ago, reviewing Lillian Hellman's memoir *Scoundrel Time*, I suggested that the American playwright's account of her confrontation in 1952 with the House Committee on UnAmerican Activities might mislead the reader into concluding that Miss Hellman had routed HUAC and set a brave precedent, by disdaining to resort to the famous Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination. In fact Arthur Miller and a few others risked prison sentences by doing precisely that – by talking freely about themselves while declining to ruin the lives of their friends. But when the crunch came for Miss Hellman, she took the Fifth; no harm there: most of us would have done the same; my complaint was that *Scoundrel Time*, like the tale that Falstaff later told to Prince Hal about routing the rogues single-handed, had swelled the deed in the telling.

Diana Trilling, the distinguished critic and wife of the late Lionel Trilling, also detected this element of *trompe l'oeil*, and she detected it with an *oeil* slightly reddened by the sand that her old friend Hellman had kicked in the direction of the Trillings. Not only had Miss Hellman ridiculed Lionel Trilling's recently reaffirmed portrait of Whittaker Chambers as a man of honour incapable of perjuring himself to destroy Alger Hiss; she had also given the impression that the Trillings figured among those liberals who 'made no protest when people in this country were jailed or ruined'.

It so happened that Mrs Trilling was then preparing for the press the excellent collection of essays here under review. Human nature being what it is, she took the opportunity to append to a relevant essay a few freshly-minted observations about her old friend, the fellow-travelling playwright, thereby precipitating one of those little scandals in the absence of which literary life would definitely not be worth pursuing. It also so happened – Fate transitorily meeting its obligations – that the two protagonists shared the same publisher, Messrs Little, Brown of Boston. In Beacon Street a decision was taken: either Trilling would excise her remarks about Hellman, or Trilling's contract would be terminated. Trilling, of course, told them to go jump in the Charles River and took her essays elsewhere. The author of *Clarement Essays* and of much-respected studies of D. H. Lawrence was never, one assumes, in danger of being silenced.

Everything – almost – that one reads from Diana Trilling's pen, whether it be about J. R. Ackerley, Lawrence, Timothy Leary, critical reactions to the film *Easy Rider*, the sexual and existential attitudes of the British upper classes, or the contours of contemporary womanhood, exudes restraint, reasonableness, balance and a calm, though deep, commitment to certain liberal values. I say 'almost' everything; the exception is politics, and more particularly the uncomfortably protracted post mortem that has been conducted since the mid-Sixties on the role of anti-communist liberal intellectuals during what is mistakenly called the McCarthy era. Here Mrs Trilling shows her claws: she is at bay, and knows it.

Lillian Hellman had originally written to the Chairman of HUAC offering to talk about herself so long as she was not required to discuss others. One cannot doubt that the offer was passionately sincere; yet Mrs Trilling sneers at it as 'a public-relations strategy' and 'a masterpiece of moral showmanship'. The Hellman book included as ballast an historical essay by the *New York Review of Books*'s leading political commentator, Garry Wills, scourge of the establishment and pitiless pursuer of every conceivable thread linking intellectuals to the CIA. Here again Mrs Trilling is sufficiently goaded and stung to lose sight of her usual high standard of polemical skill. Wills, she reveals – everyone knows it – was until 1970 a contributor to William F. Buckley Jr's ultra-right *National Review*. How, then, can we respect anyone who turns such a turtle? Easy, Mrs Trilling: you need only cast your mind back to that man of honour Whittaker Chambers, whose Vision was his famous Apostasy; or to your intellectual allies of the cold-war Fifties, every one of them an ex-communist or ex-marxist who had been saved by a blinding light: Sidney Hook, Max Eastman, William Phillips, Dwight Macdonald, Louis Fischer, Ignazio Silone, James Burnham . . .

One understands why Hellman's casual swipe touched a raw nerve or two in Diana Trilling. Since the mid-Sixties the cold-war liberals have been in disarray, constantly interrogated about their guilt (or lack of it) over Vietnam, about their guilt (or lack of it) over the CIA connection, constantly taunted by the younger generation's contemptuous rejection of the liberal Pax Americana. Everything in ruins – Israel denigrated, terrorism applauded, Stalinism forgotten, the Vietcong embraced, the great achievements of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan scorned; and neo-fascist, sloganeering students peeing on the carpet of President Kirk of Columbia.

The seizure by SDS-led students of Columbia University during the spring and summer of 1968 was of immediate and intimate concern to Mrs Trilling, for her husband was a lifelong member of the university faculty. This essay, 'On the Steps of Low Library', is well worth reading, not only for its genuinely felt pain and concern but also for its inadvertent revelation of the crippling contradictions within that liberal posture which notionally embraces social justice so long as no one does anything about it.

It was in the heat of that Columbia controversy that the poet Robert Lowell mocked Mrs Trilling as 'some housekeeping goddess of reason, preferring the confines of her mind to experience, and pronouncing on the confusion of the crowd'. The point is not well put; experience, after all, requires its mental interpretation, and no intellectual worthy of the name will shrink from pronouncing on the confusion of the crowd. Even so, Lowell was getting close when he pointed out, sarcastically, that

> her record is clear of agitation about the Vietnam War . . . She seems more preoccupied with the little violence of the unarmed student uprisings than with the great violence of the nation at war.

Just how close, is revealed in Diana Trilling's reply:

> . . . it is a fact that I have joined no marches or demonstrations. But this is not because the war is remote from any concern . . . protest of the Vietnam War has been preempted by political opinion which I do not share . . . where has there been protest against American error under an American flag? I have seen none.

Then make one? Impossible, of course; impossible, at that time, to explain the nuances – that one regretted the harvest but did not regret having sown the seed 20 years earlier: a seed whose teleology one could not discern, since the Pax Americana and the hideously exploitative dictatorships it had sustained round the world still rang a bell called democracy in one's head; impossible because one had long since become totally complacent about capitalism. As for the CIA's dark role, how could one have known? – which was more or less the ritual apology of those who quit the Communist Party in 1956.

One day back in the Fifties, Diana Trilling recalls, the American Committee for Cultural Freedom found itself penniless. Norman Thomas could see but a single solution; he would 'phone Allen', which he did, returning with the news that a cheque for $1,000 would be in the mail next morning. 'Allen', everyone present knew, was Allen Dulles, head of the CIA. By law the CIA was not allowed to support any activity within the USA. 'But none of us, myself included, protested. And why, indeed, should we have?'

Diana Trilling is honest and courageous; clearly she is outraged by those of her contemporaries who scuttled for cover when the truth began to come out, scrambling aboard the war-horse of the New Left. (And when one thinks of Dwight Macdonald, for example, one may wonder just how many Pauline trips to Damascus a fellow is entitled to in a single lifetime.) Even so, it is hard to forgive Mrs Trilling for stubbornly peddling two long-since exploded myths: that the post-war witch-hunt was the work of HUAC and McCarthy; and that only the 'high-paid' (*sic*) suffered.

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Paradoxically, she shares this delusion with Lillian Hellman, whose syndrome of victims is populated exclusively by the glamorous and the famous.

One recalls the strictures of Solzhenitsyn and Mrs Mandelstam against those foreign visitors who minimised in their reports the sufferings of ordinary Russians under Stalin. It was incomparably worse in Russia; but Mrs Trilling is no foreigner and the record, the facts, have always been available in America. I refer to the hundreds of teachers, industrial workers, seamen, scientists, longshoremen, social workers and civil servants who were fired for no crime worse than the opinions they held, or had once held. One could refer also to the instruments of the inquisition which were set up by the Truman Administration to warm applause from Mrs Trilling and her friends: the loyalty boards, the Attorney General's list, the industrial tribunals, the Smith Act trials, the deportation campaign. Only when the rogue elephant McCarthy galloped across the red-baiting prairie and began to gore the wrong victims, trampling under foot precious weapons of the cold war like the Voice of America, only then did these guardians of liberalism rediscover the proper frontiers of liberty.

Peter Conrad

The Distinguished Thing

Sir Leslie Stephen's Mausoleum Book edited by Alan Bell *Oxford* £4.25

The doubting Victorians abolished the gods, but were left with the angels, as sanctimonious superintendents of human emotion. A spirituality which had been intellectually disestablished survived by domesticating itself: angels turned from celestial intermediaries into conjugal partners – David Copperfield's Agnes, pointing insistently upwards, Coventry Patmore's angel in the house, Thackeray's 'high-bred English lady' who is 'the most complete of all Heaven's subjects in this world'. After her death in 1895, Leslie Stephen's second wife Julia was promoted to this company of secular saints, assuaging his grief by writing humanist hymns to her memory in this 'mausoleum book'. He left the manuscript in the care of his children, and scholars have only recently been allowed access to it; though its doting morbidity is oppressive, it does have a distinct value, as evidence of how Victorian agnosticism copes with death and manages to comfort itself without benefit of clergy.

Stephen dismisses the superstitious mental enslavement of religious belief, but in reviewing the history of his love for Julia he expropriates the tropes of faith and adapts them to his own bleak humanism. Just as the angel has changed from a spirit-messenger to a domestic helpmeet, so the automatic certainty of the believer has turned into the trusting mutual dependence of married lovers: as Arnold puts it, the truth of lovers to one another atones for the disconsolate confusion of the world beyond them. The Bloomsbury cult of personal relations and the holiness of affection, which maintained that it was a finer thing to betray one's country than to betray one's friend, derives from this Victorian spiritualisation of marriage, morosely enacted in Stephen's manuscript.

Julia becomes a minister of grace, a latter day pre-Raphaelite muse, in whom the blowsy sensuality of Jane Morris is redeemed as charitable high-mindedness: Woolner and Holman Hunt wanted to sculpt, paint and marry her; Mrs Cameron photographed her, and gave her the wistful, abstinent look of a nun; Stephen himself remembers her as a Pateresque icon like 'the Sistine Madonna or any other presentation of superlative beauty'. Her nursing activities turn into angelic visitations: the Cornish rustics whose distresses she succoured wondered at her concern, and considered it a providence. Her altruism becomes a metaphysical obligation: remembering her as 'a sister of mercy', haunting the sick-rooms of friends and relatives, Stephen makes her a principle of amelioration, scouring the agonised universe for pain to mitigate:

> . . . she had learned so thoroughly . . . to consider herself as set apart to relieve pain and sorrow that, when no special object offered itself for her sympathy . . . she had a stream of overflowing goodwill which forced her to look out for some channel of discharge.

Stephen's wooing of her is similarly allegorised. Immured in her own bereavement, she has renounced any claim to happiness: his task is to recall her to life, and he warns her that the process will be painful, because she is 'like a person reviving from drowning'. When he at last reconciles her to survival, she experiences a resurrection from a deathly state of crape-veiled despair: she told Stephen that his 'love of her is as great a miracle to her as any of the miracles in which I declined to believe'. The affections, distended to fill the space vacated by the gods, have their own substitute for an immortality no longer guaranteed as the privilege of the devout: Stephen learned from Wordsworth that memory is a second coming, and its recollection of tragedy in tranquillity consoles because it preserves the dead as influences, 'stimulating and elevating' the living. Stephen declares that though his own literary labours may earn him a small and obscure reputation after death, the truest immortality de-

QUEEN CHRISTABEL

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'splendidly researched... a compulsive read' The Guardian
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rives from the manifestation of a noble nature, and that was 'the achievement of my darling's life'. Religion offered merely the resurrection of the body; Stephen's ethical humanism more abstractly envisions the continuity of the soul: Julia 'will continue . . . to live in our lives' as an exemplar of noble aspiration.

She is immortalised not by the grace of God, but by the fidelity of human memory – and by the dedication of the biographer. For the *Mausoleum Book* compels a reinterpretation of Stephen's activity as editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He marks Julia's life by the 'painful milestones' of a series of deaths, and notices that his own memoir is threatening to turn into a necrology, 'a series of obituary notices', as one by one his contemporaries expire; the *DNB* is likewise a vast ancestral graveyard, with Stephen as its scholarly agnostic sexton. So dedicated is the *DNB* to the melancholy inventory of deaths that the sequence of its volumes even records its editor's gradual debility and approaching end: in the *Mausoleum Book* Stephen notes that as his health failed he had first to share editorial responsibility with Sir Sidney Lee, until finally an influenza attack in 1891 compelled him to surrender control to his partner. The project outlives its inventor, and Stephen lugubriously records his own obsolescence as if entering the report of his own death: 'Vol XXII . . . (Easter 1890) has [Lee's] name with mine on the title-page . . . Vol. XXVII (Midsummer 1891) has Lee's name alone.'

In the memoir's final entry Stephen anticipates and even welcomes his death, confident that his family, like the dictionary, will be able to do without him. It's appropriate that this passage should have been dictated to his daughter Virginia, for Stephen's meditative preoccupation with death contrasts with Virginia Woolf's anxious fear of it. To her it betokened a literary defeat: her death, she said, was the one experience she wouldn't describe – just as the significance of her life was at last vouchsafed to her, she would be deprived of the means of interpreting it. Hence the dismissive brutality of those square brackets in *To the Lighthouse*, which recapitulate the same death on which Stephen broods: Virginia Woolf kills Julia over again, with painful inexplicable abruptness, in the parenthetical assassination of Mrs Ramsay. Leslie Stephen at least had the consolation of memory; Virginia Woolf, in dealing with the same event, imposes on herself a harsher, self-disabling limitation. Death snatches characters away beyond the reach of her omnivorous, impressionistic sympathy: it is unbearable because it is indescribable.

Robin Blackburn

Left Behind

'Eurocommunism' and the State by SANTIAGO CARRILLO *Lawrence & Wishart* £5.95 and £2.75

There is a passage in this book where Carrillo asks himself how Eurocommunism differs from conventional reformism. His reply is that the Eurocommunists still aim at building a socialist society while the social-democratic parties have largely come to terms with capitalism. There may be something to this line of argument, but if so, the communist and socialist leaders of Latin and Mediterranean Europe do their best to obscure it. Felipe Gonzalez, Andreas Papandreou and François Mitterand frequently sound more socialist than Berlinguer, Carrillo or even Marchais. In *'Eurocommunism' and the State* Carrillo declares that the 'democratic road to socialism . . . presupposes *the long term co-existence of public and private forms of property*' (his emphasis). Carrillo makes it clear that he means not simply private ownership of farms and small service enterprises but also 'unearned increment' and 'private appropriation' linked to big and medium business: indeed, according to Carrillo only the 'decisive levers' (commanding heights?) of the economy need be in public hands. Carrillo devotes many pages to explaining that his model of democratic socialism should be acceptable to top executives, the main body of Spanish bishops, and professional, patriotic army officers. This Eurocommunist programme for Spain makes the average *Tribune* manifesto seem like the rankest Bolshevism.

The explanation for all this exaggerated moderation is no doubt fear of the armed forces and a wish not to repeat the experience of Allende in Chile. The most pointed sections of this book argue the need to democratise the army, police and state apparatus. This theme has relevance far outside post-Franco Spain, whose security forces and state officials have no monopoly on corruption, secretiveness and seclusion from popular invigilation and control. But the radical edge of Carrillo's argument is blunted by his willingness to separate democratic objectives from the social forces which could realise them. Against the evidence of other countries he relies on the patriotism of young officers as an antidote to the evils of an arbitrary state.

Eurocommunist leaders are unlikely to be much impressed by criticisms of their programme from the Left. More to the point will be whether the Eurocommunist strategy is viable on its own terms. Outside Italy Eurocommunism has been much better at catching headlines than at catching votes. It has yet to be shown that Eurocommunism is an attractive electoral option in any country where there is a strong and united social-democratic party. In Spain, Greece and France working-class and middle-class votes have been attracted in large numbers to socialist parties which proclaim, however demagogically, the need for drastic measures to deal with unemployment, inflation, yawning inequality and the arrogance of multi-national corporations. These parties often respond in a bolder fashion on such issues as divorce, abortion, protection of the environment and the presence of US military bases. While the socialist parties are typically dominated in a personalist fashion by the charismatic parliamentary leader, they still appear less monolithic and closed than the communist parties. The leaders of Eurocommunism increasingly treat the new socialist parties simply as rivals, rather than as allies who should be encouraged to translate their rhetoric into deeds. Instead of making common cause with the socialists and other left-wing movements the Eurocommunist leaders prefer striking out on their own – even outflanking social democracy on the right in search of alliance with the main bourgeois party.

Despite their desperate right-wing gestures the European communist parties remain a potentially more formidable and consequent force for socialism than social democracy, new or old. Hence the anxiety in Washington and our own Foreign Office, of which we have been recently reminded by Dr Owen. Communist militants organise at work as well as near the polling booth, on everyday questions as well as issues of public policy. In most West European countries they won influence and respect in the resistance to fascism. For decades their loyalties, however abused, did not lie with the ruling order in their own country. Finally, their world-view is articulated in terms which do owe something to marxism. A high proportion of the most dedicated and effective working-class activists in Western Europe today are members of a communist party. The promise of Eurocommunism is that it can begin to release them from servitude to Soviet real-politik and the cruel Soviet caricature of socialism. But this Western schism in the communist ranks could merely repeat the sad experience of the Eastern schism.

Carrillo has written a rambling book which tells us less about Spanish communism than Régis Debray's long interview with its author. Nevertheless, it deserves its status as a crucial document of Eurocommunism, whose ambivalence it reflects vividly. The leader of a reformist party would scarcely need to justify his proposals by reference to Gramsci and Althusser. The better passages include a discussion of the Soviet Union which won the book Moscow's anathema, and an argument about the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' which avoids the facile identification of Marx's concept with the Soviet model. There are signs here of the stimulus supplied to Spanish communism by Fernando Claudin when he opened up a discussion of the Stalinist record in leading bodies in the early 1960s But while Carrillo is uninhibited in criticising the CPSU he is most circumspect about the history of his own party – indeed he permits himself a lengthy quotation from Stalin justifying the role of the Spanish CP in the Civil War.

'Eurocommunism' and the State invites the reader to judge it not simply as a programme or *prise de position* by an import-

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ant communist leader, but as a contribution to marxist theory. Carrillo writes that he regards himself 'as a modest marxist political worker' but that he feels the necessity to give the positions of his party 'a foundation of principle, a marxist foundation'. Judged in these terms there is a glaring anomaly in his presentation. While Carrillo recognises the strength which pluralism gives to parliamentary assemblies, he nowhere acknowledges the value of pluralism within the workers' movement itself. This is the umbilical cord which still ties Eurocommunists to a disastrous and discredited past.

Hilary Spurling

Eyeballs & Gums

The Anthropologists' Cookbook edited by JESSICA KUPER *Routledge & Kegan Paul* £4.75

Anyone attempting to put *The Anthropologists' Cookbook* to practical use will be struck at once by the widely different degrees of enthusiasm with which its editor has had to contend. Admittedly, many of her contributors have feasted heartily on their travels and feel no hesitation in sending back glowing reports of specialities like Eskimo seal meat ('It should be full of blood . . . boiled in a mixture of sea and fresh water'), or a delectable Cameroonian steamed pudding made of melon seeds and flavoured with tadpoles. Others turn in tips for making flying ants palatable, and 'a wonderful way to cook a really tough . . . piece of goat'. But people who have persevered with such delicacies as roasted, half-raw kangaroo in the Australian outback, or spotted dog in the South Seas, tend to adopt a more gingerly note ('The dog did not taste as bad as its smell would have led one to believe . . .'). A very few declined to contribute altogether on grounds that their recollections of hardship, hunger and indigestion in the field were too painful to revive.

Head-hunting experts proved uncooperative ('the nutritional value of cannibalism may . . . be regarded as questionable, unless a group is in a position to consume its own number in a year'), though the active student will find himself dicing with discomfort, if not death, fairly regularly among these pages. Only the hardiest will care to tangle with the cuisines of, say, the Siriono of Bolivia ('No condiments of any kind are used in cooking'), or the Ethiopian Gurage whose staple food is the 'false banana' or ensete plant: the Gurage themselves are pretty sensitive about the stench of fermenting ensete which envelops their back gardens, while foreigners, including other Ethiopians, can barely keep the stuff down. As for the Trumai people of Brazil, non-Indians are advised to replace manioc with cornflour in their recipes as the former contains cyanide and could prove fatal. Small wonder if one comes after a while to recognise an almost gloating note in recipes like this one, for Faroese Boiled Sheep's Head, which seem to constitute some sort of dare to the home-bound reader:

> Burn the wool off the head with a flame. Saw the head in two longitudinally between the eyes . . . Everything can be eaten except the bones. Fastidious persons may omit the eyeballs and the gums.

But what puts this cookbook in a class by itself is not simply its wary, at times positively threatening tone. Although hailed by Professor Mary Douglas as 'a charming gesture to international gastronomy', its criteria are generally very far from purely gastronomical. Availability, for one thing, dictates the menus of characters like the Trumai (who traditionally stick to fowl and monkey) or the frugal Faroese who, favouring plain roast or boiled joints in what sounds like a ghastly parody of English nursery food, cultivate nothing but the potato and the rhubarb. Elsewhere things are trickier still. Among the Padhola of Uganda milk is regarded with suspicion because it looks like semen and might turn an unborn baby white. The Trumai hold that pretty well anyone may eat fishpaste except for new fathers, recent murderers and menstruating women. In Sri Lanka it is a matter of good manners to the gods to let your milk boil over as the sun's first rays strike the cooking pot.

How far the English reader can or should attempt to reproduce the type and quality of foodstuffs called for here, let alone the conditions of preparation or the prohibitions governing their consumption, is a moot point. Confronted with a mass of highly peculiar ingredients, Jessica Kuper herself claims to have had difficulty in obtaining only kangaroo and puffin on the London market. To cook even a cross section of her recipes would require from most Westerners ingenuity of the same high order as *The Kenya Settlers' Cookery Book*, once the culinary bible of any young bride marrying into the colonial service and setting out to reproduce on trek over a bush fire a passable imitation of roast beef with two veg. and boiled suet pudding.

But all those inclined to mock this handsome voguish volume with its Habitat-style jacket and earnest, ecological instructions might do well to ponder its underlying implications. The spread of electricity, tourism and mass production means that even the anthropologists' most far-flung quarry are increasingly reluctant to spend hours each day at their grindstones. Worcester sauce is already an essential ingredient in Panamanian peasant cookery; Ponapean islanders in the Pacific prize canned fish far more highly than the live variety frisking round their shores; among the Ghanaian Avatime tinned sardines form part of a dish reserved for fetish priests and post-menopausal women at the tribal nubility ceremonies. So that responsibility for the ancient secrets entrusted to Mrs Kuper's hands might be said in some sense to devolve upon the housewives of Hampstead and Greenwich Village, who bid fair to become the only people on earth prepared to put in time constructing elaborate earth ovens in their back yards, scouring the hedgerows for three-pronged wooden stirring sticks, extracting their own salt from the ash of weeds, stalking spotted dogs or simply waiting months, sometimes years on end, for the noxious false banana to complete its fermentation.

Jonathan Keates

Joy Boy

Carols: The Joy of Christmas by EDWARD HEATH *Sidgwick & Jackson/EMI Music* £3.95 and £1.95

Travels: People and Places in My Life by EDWARD HEATH *Sidgwick & Jackson* £6.50

Just in case we had forgotten that he existed, here comes Edward Heath, a Sidgwick and Jackson Santa, with a heartwarming Xmas package. With print and paper like crushed Maltesers, *Carols: The Joy of Christmas* has 36 arrangements (unattributed – presumably by Ted, the Joy of EMI) of more or less well-known tunes. None of them, with the exception of *Whence is that Goodly Fragrance?* and *Joseph dearest, Joseph mine*, is in more than one flat or sharp, and I was gratifyingly able to strum *Hark the Herald Angels* and *The Holly and the Ivy* without scrambling my accidentals. The introduction is tritely egocentric, the picture researcher has done her work thoroughly, and the carols, beyond some rather odd goings-on in the chorus to *God Rest You Merry*, are untampered with.

Riffling through the pages of *Travels*, a comparably naked piece of book-production, recalls those floppy cartoon books sold during the days of Brumas the Baby Polar Bear, which, if you flipped them over quickly enough, created the illusion that the cuddly cub was actually diving off a Mappin terrace into a pool below. In the present work the effect is more like Dorian Gray: the familiar face, at first youthfully bovine above a belted mac and a rather unlikely pair of plus-fours at Le Bourget, takes on spectacles, loses them, fills out and gradually becomes the big, dented mangel-wurzel emerging at the top of the Great Wall of China or poking itself out of a Rhine Army

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tank. Much of the book, indeed, is taken up with illustrations of variable quality. Two are mildly interesting, pre-war Düsseldorf, Biedermayer grace against skyline smudged with factories, and a beautifully rough-grained shot of allied troops on a Normandy road. Otherwise they are either dull, inept or thoroughly absurd, as when Heath poses between the Emperor and Empress of Japan – she in a kimono, the men in suits, Gilbert and George in *Madame Butterfly*. Unintentional irony creeps in too: a GI, superintending disgruntled Vietnamese as they rebuild a village, faces a snapshot of the author and LBJ sunk in White House armchairs, fists around paper cups, apparently watching telly.

The accompanying text artfully smears slabs of autobiography with a smooth margarine of travelogue. As the exotic locales whirr round after each other in anodyne home-movie style, the work swells into an unconscious threnody for vanished voyages, and as the goodwill missions, epoch-making handshakes, press-conference attitudinising and general peace-in-our-time-ishness increase, we pine for a real traveller. Mungo Park ransoming his way across the African bush with his waistcoat buttons, Gertrude Bell kipping in the desert sandwiched between two Bedouin – anything to counter the staleness with which Heath greets a world compelled to welcome and flatter him. Here's a sample:

> Most interesting of all is Persepolis, the ancient city of Darius, the remains of which have been well protected by the climate. It is an awe-inspiring experience to move around the foundations of the great halls, to see the noble pillars, and in particular, to look at the impressive engravings on the walls; awe-inspiring to think that 4,000 years ago men were capable of such construction and decoration; and quite remarkable to think that so much should have survived.

Heath does not mention the Sahara. Anyone familiar with that desert will know about the Erg. The Erg is a high inland plateau, intensely dry, hot and shingly, more or less inimical to any form of life. The fact that the author's initials are E.R.G. proved fatally intrusive on my powers of free association, and the analogy, however cheap, offered irresistible proof that *le style c'est l'homme*. That this wretched, drivelling affair, its impressions fuzzy with jetlag and neutral-flavoured as an airline meal, should have been made into a bestseller, with all the attendant flimflam of the hired train and 8.2 autographed copies per minute, is a signpost towards the gap between those who buy books and those who read them.

Mervyn Jones

On Contradictions

Mao Tse-Tung in the Scales of History edited by Dick Wilson *Cambridge* £10.50 and £3.50

Mao Tse-Tung: The Man in the Leader by LUCIAN W. PYE *Harper & Row* £6.95

It is over a year since Mao died, and the first stones are falling in what will probably be an avalanche of biographies. Mr Wilson, editor of *China Quarterly*, has put together a collection of essays by contributors to his magazine, with such titles as 'The Philosopher', 'The Political Leader' and 'The Soldier'. The list of contents doesn't include 'The Brother' or 'The Husband', but this lack is met by Professor Pye, author of a biographical study which seeks to probe Mao's character through his intimate relationships. Mao was still alive when Pye wrote, but only just, so this book too can be taken as a consideration of the whole extraordinary life.

One may as well begin with some neat phrases by Michael Oksenberg, who discusses Mao as political leader:

> He was an inquisitive thinker who savoured power; a visionary who remained an activist; simultaneously a revolutionary who revelled in disorder, and a dictator who sought to impose a new order. In temperament, he was mercurial yet disciplined, benevolent yet ruthless, solicitous yet tyrannical.

It is indeed impossible to write of Mao except in terms of paradox and contradiction. What he embodied, he also pursued and enjoyed; his major theoretical work was entitled *On Contradictions*, and the notion of duality – which seems equally to derive from traditional Chinese concepts, and from the marxist postulates of thesis and antithesis – was central to his thought. Quick verdicts will certainly get us nowhere, and it has to be said that Mr Wilson was in too much of a hurry to get his book out. The essays by Oksenberg, Stuart Schram, John Gittings and Wang Gungwu are solid contributions to analysis, but the others yield an odd mixture of banalities, recitals of well-known facts, facile 'tributes' and sheer bad writing.

Edward Friedman, writing of Mao as 'The Innovator', remarks that at some periods he didn't appear to be an innovator at all, and that if he had died in 1945 people might be asking whether he was even a revolutionary. In the communist-controlled areas of the north-west,

> rather than collectivise land and impose new social forms, the rebels merely reduced rent and interest, established a fair and progressive tax system, moved forward on jobs, health and education and kept government as inexpensive and unobtrusive as possible.

Indeed, in 1946 Mao was advancing the perspective 'for several decades' of a mixed economy built on co-operation with 'national' capitalists and American aid, which caused communists elsewhere – notably in India – to label him a revisionist. But he was later to order the most radical transformations and experiments seen anywhere in the communist world; to pin the revisionist charge on Tito, Togliatti and the Indian CP, not to mention Khrushchev; and to describe the Soviet Union as 'a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie'. The truth is – as Schram makes clear by citing Mao's writings, and actions, of the 1920s – that the revolutionary predated the moderate.

Such a chronological review, all the way from the Kiangsi Soviet to the cultural revolution, shows Mao's career as a series of twists and turns which left most of his comrades breathlessly seeking to keep up, or jettisoned when they failed to do so. These reversals were of a different nature from those that might be enforced by circumstances, on the analogy of Lenin's New Economic Policy. They responded – and this is why Mao was not in the least ashamed of them – to his philosophy of history and his conception of leadership. They were also a response to (or one might better say an expression of) something deeply embedded in his personality.

Here we have to turn to Pye's book. It is frankly a psychohistory, to use the newly fashionable term, and Pye makes a spirited defence of that mode of interpretation. Most historians hate psychohistory, but I'm disposed to wonder what all the fuss is about, or rather why the method is taboo when applied to political leaders considering that it's recognised in the evaluation of figures with a different kind of achievement (all biographies of Dickens have been psychohistories since about 1920). To put the matter briefly, Pye thinks that Mao's character was shaped by the abrupt withdrawal of his mother's exclusive affection when he was two years old and a younger brother was born. This explains Mao's determination to manipulate people in his own interests, a skill which he developed to formidable effect, and also his inability to trust anyone completely, resulting in his abandonment of two wives, of his brothers, and of such close comrades as Peng Teh-huai, Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao.

Of course, the trouble with psychohistory is the shortage of authentic evidence, especially when we're talking about what happened 70 or 80 years ago in the village of Shaoshan. Pye is vulnerable to the charge that when he has facts he uses them, and when he has none he assumes them. He can prove, in a novel and interesting passage, that Mao's conflict with his father didn't arise from any particularly atrocious behaviour on the latter's part, considering the norms of Chinese family life; but he can't prove that Mao actually resented, or was on bad terms with, the brother. That Mao in the end abandoned this brother – who was executed in 1943 by the Governor of Sinkiang, well outside Mao's sphere of influence – is a pretty unconvincing accusation.

But the portrait of Mao, taken as a whole, is persuasive. One thinks of Mao's passion for identifying himself with young people, almost compelling them to re-live his life – all those youngsters wandering about the country in 1967 were repeating Mao's journeys to Peking, Shanghai and back to the countryside in 1919-20. One thinks of his self-isolation, which has created a real difficulty in establishing how far he was actually responsible for such ventures as the cultural revolution. One thinks of his instinct for catching people off balance; all his initiatives were surprises, and would have been more successful with systematic

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preparation. One thinks of his refusal to identify with a single power base – sometimes he relied on the Party, sometimes on the army, sometimes on the youth and the Red Guards, sometimes on spontaneous 'rebel' mass movements. One thinks of the abandonment of comrades, which never amounted to destruction in Stalin's style; it wasn't his fault if Kao Kang committed suicide or Lin Piao died (allegedly) in an air crash. One thinks of the adulation which he must have approved, contrasting with astonishingly modest utterances:

> I am a person with many shortcomings, I am by no means perfect. Very often, there are times when I don't like myself. I have not mastered all the various domains of Marxist learning. And for example, I do not know foreign languages well either. I have only just begun recently to study economic work.

No other great man – and surely he was a great man – has been so ready to display his own uncertainties. Pye sees this as an ambivalent masculine-feminine nature, which is as it may be (I don't want a lot of letters about that). I am intrigued above all by the rapport between Mao and the Chinese people. It's on this subject that we are most in the dark; it seems to me highly unlikely that the Chinese all this time have regarded Mao simply as a tyrant under whose yoke they groaned, but I shouldn't be able to disprove that proposition. When I wrote about Mao on the morrow of his death I compared him with Napoleon (who was also devoted to his mother, and who also ditched his first wife). The affection that each of these men inspired – if we may assume that – must have had, as well as its component of awe and admiration, another component of protective concern evoked by a manifested vulnerability. Heine caught the note when he made the loyal Grenadier promise:

> *Dann steig' ich gewaffnet hervor aus*
> *mein' Grab*
> *Mein' Kaiser, mein' Kaiser zu schützen.*

– *zu schützen*, to protect, not *zu folgen*. Mao deliberately, but also intuitively, depicted himself at times as opposed and despised by the controllers of the Party and Government machine, and as having no friends but the common people. He deliberately, but also intuitively, used the De Gaulle trick of being ready to depart if he wasn't wanted. Nobody ever dared to deny that he was indispensable.

Probably he was. The twists and turns, and the astonishing balancing act through which he led China, were integral to his political creativity. For if he had pursued no other aims than innovation, popular spontaneity and egalitarianism, the result might have been the chaos to which the country did at crucial times approach. And if he had anchored China solely to hard work and discipline, he would simply have made a second Soviet Russia.

He didn't altogether know what he was doing. He portrayed himself as continually experimenting, struggling with his environment, learning. He would have been content, I imagine, if his successors had weighed him up as he weighed up Stalin: '70 per cent right, 30 per cent wrong.' Instead, they can be expected to make him into a deity while burying the vibrant life in what he represented. They won't help us to understand him, and that understanding can be sought only through an ocean of reflection and argument.

Jeremy Treglown

A Handful of Dust

The Sin Eater by ALICE THOMAS ELLIS *Duckworth* £4.95
A Scanner Darkly by PHILIP K. DICK *Gollancz* £3.50
Brothers of the Head by BRIAN W. ALDISS *Pierrot* £6.95 and £3.95

It's hard to imagine a better book with a worse title than *The Sin Eater*. I'm not even sure which person the consumer of wickedness is meant to be – a confession made with some nervousness: Alice Thomas Ellis's waspish humour at the expense of her characters sometimes extends to the reader – we are dared to suppose, for example, that Hesiod is an old Welsh poet – and anyone who lays that kind of trap may well be sitting at home now, decorously falling about (her own phrase) at the notion of a reviewer who doesn't recognise her title as an allusion to *The Mabinogion* or one of the books of the Apocrypha.

Well, who *is* this vicious gobbler? First suspect must be Rose, a female Waugh ('I stand exactly where I always stood, while the Church has ebbed from me') whose relish of her own reactionary intolerance becomes almost carnivorous during a family get-together in the Welsh mansion of her dying father-in-law, the Captain. Another strong candidate is Gomer, a repellently fat local boy, grandson of the Captain's daily help. He is a conspicuous guzzler of evil things, whether in the pantry among the welshcakes or with a bottle of scotch in the garden pavilion, where he has Forsterian dealings with the Captain's married son Michael. But then again, it might be the family's ill-featured tame sheep, nicknamed Virginia Woolf 'because of the facial resemblance', which wanders in and out of the action always chewing an ugly mouthful of whatever's on offer.

Whether or not any of these is the subject, the literary allegiances they throw into focus don't seem accidental. Alice Thomas Ellis's first novel has some of the satirical malice, the implacable cruelty of plotting and the snobbish humour of early Waugh, and a lot of Virginia Woolf's narrative method – the fluid movement from one centre of awareness to another among the characters, and the *Lighthouse*-like way she uses the family's annual cricket match against the village as a focus both for the action and for individual feelings. Forster is recalled, too, not only in her alertness to suppressed sexuality but in what is at the same time the novel's most original feature. It is a fiction about the British Empire, satirising both the pretensions of the rulers and the inadequacies of the ruled. This empire is not Forster's India, though, but Wales today, its housing estates and holiday resorts despised by the English landowning family which has profited from them, its people's resentment seen at one level in their unimpressed behaviour after the cricket match (which they win), at another in the vengeful gluttony and lusts of Gomer. The story's gothic ending has been a shade too clearly signalled, and Alice Thomas Ellis enjoys Rose's venom so much that her sympathy with the nicer characters comes over as something of an authorial effort. But it's an impressively self-confident novel, full of uncomfortable jokes and sharp perceptions.

Whether fictional nastiness is nasty in itself is an old critical question with no easy answer. *A Scanner Darkly*, for example, suffers from its own niceness. It's a horror-story set in the future but embedded in the present, about an under-cover narcotics agent hooked on the substance whose dealers he is chasing. As an agent he is issued with a scrambler-suit that disguises his whole personality: known to his employers as Fred, he goes around outside as Robert Arctor. Difficulties arise when Fred is told to observe Arctor and finds himself in front of the scanner of the title, watching videotapes of himself. The situation produces a lot of laughs ('How long does this garbage go on? he asked himself') but of course it is allegorical. *A Scanner Darkly* begins with a man maddened by his conviction that he is covered with bugs. His delusion suggests the idea that Arctor/Fred's self-bugging is also a fantasy. The whole plot may be the product of an imagination whose ruin has been symbolised early on by the mysterious destruction of his main source of pleasure, a cephalochromoscope. Whether or not the novel should be read primarily as an account of drug-induced schizophrenia, it is a reliably well-written, often very funny and disturbing piece of sf, weakened by a softheartedness whose origins Philip K. Dick rather lachrymosely admits at the end are autobiographical. The miseries of drug-addiction are laid on the line in a way that doesn't escape didacticism, any more than Arctor's references to the daughters of his broken marriage fully avoid schmaltz.

The name of the drug in question – Substance Death – is one of the schoolboyish underlinings Dick enjoys in common with other sophisticated sf writers, Brian W. Aldiss among them. Aldiss's story is about the life and death of a pair of Siamese twins with a half-formed third head on one shoulder. They live on a promontory called L'Estrange Head; their dog, which dies, is called Hope. It is on the whole a very successful filling-out of a short story originally published last year. Presented like an official report with submissions from the twins' sister, the solicitor and impresario of the pop group they form, their mistress, their doctor and so on, its resigned impartiality is much more horrifying and (an improvement on the original) more moving than anything Dick's more overtly engaged narrative produces. The book is extremely well illustrated in a gruesome series of Hockney-esque paintings by Ian Pollock.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

The Things from Outer Space

Star Wars (U) *Dominion; Leicester Square Theatre, from 27 December*
The Deep (A) *Odeon, Leicester Square*
The Last Remake of Beau Geste (A) *Plaza 1 and general release, from 26 December*
Rollercoaster (A) *Empire, from 26 December*
Shirin's Wedding *The Other Cinema*
Landscape After Battle (AA) *ICA Cinema Club, 19-22 December*

Let's pretend we had never heard of it till now, a game made easier in my professional case in that I was kept wondering up to last week if I was actually going to get a ticket to see the damn thing. George Lucas is a young, shy director, with *THX-1138* and *American Graffiti* previously to his credit. Now he has created *Star Wars* and he has done well. With more than a touch of Tolkien behind its ears, the film incorporates an amazing number of pop genre references: to the Western (briefly), to supermen comic books, to Saturday-morning cinema, to sf in general and to two-men acts (Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello) in particular. It has a gosh-golly kid hero, a bleakish princess out of Feuillade, a mercenary, a sage and many mutant monsters. It also has splendid hardware, much of it the product of British studio wizardry. As for plot, after an early moment or so of disquiet, you can settle back in your seat and turn the mind down to a low hum of attention. Giant, tilted letters roll back in infinity, proclaiming 'A long time ago, in a galaxy far away', and then more exposition ensues, setting up that unease, before a swift shift into a basic story. Evil is embodied in a giant, manufactured planet: good is Alec Guinness and the Force (roughly, Christ and the Faith). Rebel Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher), bearer of the plans to outwit the baddies in their bid for galactic control, is quickly kidnapped: just as fast, a gang of goodies assembles to rescue her and civilisation as only Mr Lucas knows it. There is Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill), a Robin without his Batman; a tough space-pilot with his attendant giant and simian companion, Chewbacca ('Would somebody get this big walking carpet out of my way?' blurts the fairly beady Princess later); saintly Mr Guinness with his neon sword and every pore exuding confident wisdom; and a couple of robots, See-Threepio (Anthony Daniels in a moulded gold suit, the quavering Hollywood butler to the hilt), and Artoo-Detoo (diminutive Kenny Baker as a sort of nice and stunted Dalek, all plaintive bleeps and murmurs): for many, these last will steal the show.

I suppose my favourite item was a lunatic space-saloon, with some truly grisly super-Muppets quaffing and quarrelling, but one cannot omit mention of the whizzing, zapping machines lent unusual solidity and persuasiveness by marvellous trickery. The dialogue is paltry, the technical stuff in particular, and it must be intentional that so much is inaudible, though one did – alas – manage to catch a heavy sip of Guinness: 'You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy.' Presumably, Mr Lucas decided, at some desperate stage, that fine words butter no parsecs. The thing works best when it simply thingifies: a gaggle of torch-eyed hooded desert creatures, a holograph of the Princess, a sort of sinister board-game where minute nasties gobble each other up. If it is more a question of exactly why this olio should have been so gratefully grabbed by both audiences and media, and in which order, it has to be said the enterprise is genial and accomplished. A masterpiece, except of timing, it isn't. And I might add that John Williams's score, however intentionally corny, is corny.

Peter Yates's *The Deep* is only skin-diver so. It may have jaws but it lacks teeth. A lovely couple, David (Nick Nolte, the poor man's Kris Kristofferson) and Gail (Jacqueline Bisset, the rich man's dream), go underwater off Bermuda and come up with no more than Peter Benchley's novel has to offer. This entails some unnecessary chase-around between an ampoule containing morphine, one of a huge consignment lost in a World War II munitions and medical ship, and bits of early 18th-century Spanish treasure, mysteriously found on the same sea-bed site. A sort of Haitian-type band of blacks, not averse to voodoo if it encourages the spectatorship to feel that something extremely unpleasant and maybe sexual has happened to Miss Bisset, moves in: as does Robert Shaw. I am beginning to suspect any movie in which Shaw appears and that is a sad state of affairs: he is, after all, a substantially better actor than Richard Harris and yet they merge and mingle in recent memories. For one thing, their accents seem to be made up on a day-to-day basis: a student of phonetics could have a field-trip on Mr Shaw's bitten-off utterances. Reluctantly summoned in here as an expert treasure-diver, he snarls 'Girl!' and 'Boy!' at Gail and David as if improvising Hemingway at a party. Remaining members of his fan-club may be bucked to hear that he surfaces, in one of the more improbable escapes since *The Perils of Pauline* had us all by the throat, in the dying – if not dead – seconds. This high-flown nonsense, which slings in a deal of learned chat about King Philip of Spain and a proposed mistress (it even dares to show an illustration from a *book*), earns its box-office interest when submerged. The subaquaceous interludes bring in an oversize moray eel and a shoal of sharks: they are well orchestrated and it is happily impossible to hear a word.

Marty Feldman is already such a grotesque, what with those joke eyeballs and that stylised lisp, that there is often difficulty in finding him funny. All credit to him, then, for holding back, both as director and performer, for at least the first half-hour of *The Last Remake of Beau Geste*. If films get increasingly hard to describe this may be what the age demands and anyway no bad thing: it is merely that it leaves the reviewer with a sense of chill around his verbals. This crushing spoof revolves about the adventures of a pair of unidentical twins (Mr Feldman and Michael York), picked up cheap from an orphanage – 'Come in and browse. No obligation', it advertises – by Sir Hector Geste (a stand-out performance by Trevor Howard). He has already wandered, with comprehensive unamiability, through his magnificently ghastly family seat, blasting away in all directions as he awaits the birth of an heir. Finally, a wail is heard. 'Cowardly little swine!' he cries initiating a vein of entertaining bad taste that is to flow throughout. Baby turns ou to be a daughter; hence the orphanage bar gain deal; hence – I suppose – the rest.

Goonery prevails. There is a safe con taining a precious jewel, the theft and pur suit of which stand in for plot. Naturally the safe is protected by a painting of Queer Victoria and openable only by manipula tion of protruding regal boobs. Spik Milligan staggers hither and yon as a wrinkled retainer in these early idiocies sometimes with a stuffed dog clenched on t a leg, at others taking a second stuffed do on a trolley for walkies. Time passes, calen dar pages rip off until Milligan is quit snowed under, we are into the dicier matte of sending up movie fashion down the year Purists may resent – we have now got to desert somewhere – the misuse of a cli of Gary Cooper as legionnaire (it is man pulated so that he appears to be handin Feldman a reefer): I didn't much min Ann-Margret is oddly cast as a fortun hunter and has a great, strange interluc with Terry Thomas as Foreign Legion prisc governor: 'You've made an old man fe very old,' he gratefully breathes. Don't mi this, for all its warts.

James Goldstone's *Rollercoaster* is elega and efficient, a made-to-measure thrill about a quiet young man (Timothy Bo toms) who goes round planting bombs American amusement parks and ou guessing the assorted experts ranged again him (George Segal and Richard Widma are finely world-weary in mutually host roles): the youth just wants a million do lars. The film has the intelligence never examine his motivation beyond that. gets, in the cleanest conveyor-belt-style, with the job of creating suspense. It has t extra merit of looking consistently attracti photography by David M. Walsh. The scr is pretty sharp and neat, too. Soon co puters will be churning out this kind undemanding fodder.

Helma Sanders's *Shirin's Wedding*, wh I briefly mentioned during last year's Lo don Film Festival, is a pensive West Germ piece about a young Turkish peasant g who defiantly makes her way to Colog

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in search of her errant fiancé. Good documentary exposure of the factory-slave fate awaiting her: a disappointingly melodramatic end. Andrzej Wajda's *Landscape After Battle* dates back to 1970 but is as rewarding, on reflection, as his famous trilogy (1954-58) centring on the Polish resistance. As baroque as *Ashes and Diamonds*, it conjures up a baffled and bitter no-man's-land thronged by concentration-camp survivors whose nihilism is epitomised in a doomed love-affair between a half-crazed poet and a Jewish refugee. Astounding images and notions marred by the sentimentalism that Wajda, the cynic with a heart of melted snow, is always open to.

Films-2

Michael Moorcock

3, 2, 1, Rip Off!

Ever since I had heard about it I had looked forward to *Star Wars*. It was going to be the first unselfconsciously sophisticated 'space opera' on film, a mixture of Michael Curtiz's Errol Flynn pictures and *Doctor Who*: romance and super-science set in a remote galaxy, when space pirates and evil semi-human forces fought against the background of a luxuriously decadent interstellar empire. The US critics welcomed the film with, it seemed, one voice . . .

It's my theory that the success of many films is based squarely on their structural incompetence. The same audience returns again and again only because it is desperate for the promised catharsis it never actually experiences. Certain Disney films have this quality. *Star Wars* is very much in the same tradition – part of a tightly controlled marketing operation producing spin-off toys, games, records, calendars, books, comics, clothing, and of course, sequels – except that it lacks any of the early Disney's originality of imagination. Though technically glossy it is fundamentally dull and misconceived.

If *2001* was a dramatised display system given a patina of irony and a mysteriously metaphysical ending out of desperation (I was at the studio when, two years behind schedule, they were still wondering how to end it), then *Star Wars* is a ramshackle collage of undigested influences which ran out of the director's control at an early stage. Good directors are reluctant to work on 'effects' pictures. *Star Wars* is not so much a story as a naïve compendium of other people's images used haphazardly, without grace or wit. It rips off a subculture and gives nothing back to it. It is an empty thing.

George Lucas is credited as the film's sole creator, and the only source he admits is *Flash Gordon*; but the real sources are much closer to modern Hollywood – the semi-underground West Coast sf comics of the Sixties and Seventies, sf magazine illustrations of the same period, and other people's movies. The work of uncredited artist after uncredited artist is faithfully brought to life on the screen. I recognised Vaughn Bodé (who died recently in his twenties) for his highly personal robots, aliens, backgrounds, compositions and sound-effect 'dialogue'; Howard Chaykin, whose *Cody Starbuck* is the original – lock, stock and pirate starship – of the hero's main sidekick, Han Solo; and John Schoenherr for his space-stations and space-armour. Other artists whose ideas are used include Emshwiller and Freas – names that mean virtually nothing to the public at large although their work is familiar to anyone who studies those compilations of sf magazine covers appearing everywhere these days.

None of that would matter much if the script and conception (both by Lucas) had an ounce of original flair. The script has one or two good jokes but is otherwise feeble. The film depends entirely on its 'visuals' and to me those are breathtaking only because they are so completely second-hand. Lucas isn't the first to battle effects departments and lose but he is the first to claim so much credit for so little work. He is no Curtiz. He has no suitable actors. The main human characters are mediocre TV smoothies who would look happier in after-shave ads. Guinness and Cushing are wasted. The wide appeal of the film is in its whimsical robots and humanoids, but they are traditional Oz quasi-children, Disney animals. Also notable is the *hommage* to *633 Squadron* which takes up so much of the final sequence. *Star Wars* must be one of the biggest acts of *hommage* to the largest number of unnamed, unpaid people in the history of film-making.

Genre films are bound to contain many similarities of character and plot: *Star Wars* is the first fully-fledged wide-screen space opera so it is not to its discredit that it has echoes of Frank Herbert or Isaac Asimov. What is remarkable, however, is the quantity of specific copying and the fact that it is lousy when it doesn't copy. In all interviews Lucas is cautious about crediting his influences. Indeed, he has denied those that are most obvious. Ironically, Ed Emshwiller is perhaps the best 'underground' film-maker as well as being an outstanding sf illustrator. Emshwiller used his sf work to help finance his excellent films (*Relativity*, *Fusion*, etc.) which never made him any money. Chaykin could be the unluckiest of all. He took on *Star Wars* comics to make a living, drawing a debased version of his own original character (from *Star Reach*, 1974, and the short-lived *Ironwolf*, 1973). Would 20th Century, who are making so much money from the film, hand out a few thousand dollars to the original artists if they knew how much *Star Wars* owed to their ideas? Probably not. People are always making unjustified claims on successful pictures. One of the few of those artists I know refuses to carp for just that reason.

The best villain in the film, Darth Vader, is such an obvious lift from the Ice Warrior in *Doctor Who* (down to his noisy respirator, unseen face, voice and superhuman strength) that I thought for a moment, when he first appeared, that we were in for a prolonged episode of the Doctor's adventures. No such luck; *Star Wars* lacks the humour, the script, the invention, the plot dynamics and the genuine creativity displayed in the best *Doctor Who* stories. *Star Wars* loots a form: it is the biggest exploitation movie of them all.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

All Shook Up

Elvis *Astoria*
Things That Go Bump in the Night *New End*
Fosdyke Saga Part Two *Bush*

It could have been an evening soggy with mandatory nostalgia. Down in the stalls were the one-time teds, their bootlace ties long since abandoned for open-necked shirts and dangling medallions; and up on the stage was a chunk of over-age beefcake called James Proby, once better known as P.J., and better known still for possessing the most unreliable fly-buttons in show business. They had all congregated to hold a wake for ole swivel-hips, he of the sculpted and lacquered black hair and the hundred white Cadillacs, lately gone to deliver his 10 per cent to an even more tenacious manager than his own Colonel Parker.

Surprising to report, then, that the proceedings did not get hopelessly sheened over. Zest and energy triumphed over glycerine; and for that it seems we have to thank Jack Good and Ray Cooney, who have hired some spanking musicians and allowed them to dash from number to number like hyped-up burglars rifling a jewellery-store. *Blue Suede Shoes, Hound Dog, Trouble, Good Luck Charm* . . . they are are all there, stretching from Presley's raucous beginnings to his primped and packaged middle age, and put over by singers seemingly selected on the mystical principle

Arts Council
OF GREAT BRITAIN

Bursaries for Composers 1977/78

The Council proposes to award to composers two major bursaries of up to £4,500 and six minor bursaries of up to £2,500. The closing date for completed applications is 13 January; decisions will be reached in February. Intending applicants should write for an information sheet and application form, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, to the Music Officer (Bursaries) Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU. The scheme excludes jazz composition, about which there will be a further announcement.

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of three-in-one and one-in-three. Proby, who has come to look harder and coarser with time, and might now be mistaken for a night-club bouncer, is the oldest Elvis, and Timothy Whitnall, an olive-faced boy with a pleasant voice but a strangely wooden pelvis, is the youngest. My favourite was the median, a long loose performer who claims to have been christened Shakin' Stevens (hardly more consistent a name, to my mind, than Boppin' Harrison-Smythe). Up he rose from the catacombs of the stage through red and green smoke, a rock Mephistopheles – and proceeded to *be* Elvis Presley, an all-elastic dervish vaulting helter-skelter and out of breath across the octaves.

There could be, and no doubt one day will be, a different show, with more biographical detail and more characterisation. It would be nice to hear something of the Presley who liked to creep up beside strangers with their noses jammed against shop-windows, and casually buy them a gold-plated limousine or whatever else they were coveting. It would be less nice, but perhaps even more interesting, to get a glimpse of last-gasp Presley: probably sick, bombed-out and paranoid, his colon twisted and eyes fading, narcotic-medicines on his shelves, and a sub-machine gun among the revolvers in the travelling armoury he called his car. All that would, however, involve actresses to play his mother and wife, actors for his henchmen, procurers and bodyguards; and Messrs Good and Cooney achieve a surprising amount by much simpler expedients, such as back-projections of parents, fans and funeral, and a neon ticker-tape rattling out dates, places and key events. It is, I suppose, not a lot more than an animate album, a juke-box that eccentrically sprouts arms, legs and sable sideburns when you cram in your loose change: but it still makes a racy, concentrated evening, a party at which it's no misery to be a wallflower.

In later life Presley is said to have closeted himself in his mansion and declared a state of siege, rather the predicament of the characters in Terence McNally's *Bump in the Night*. This comes to us nearly 14 years after its American opening, and now seems dated and callow, a guileless confrontation between open-hearted optimism, represented by a winsome young homosexual, and stingy fatalism, the special property of the glum family which lures him behind its fortifications, there to humiliate him. Who can nowadays believe that the boy, reminded of his bedroom proclivities, would instantly lapse into agonised distraction and blunder off to certain death on the electric fence outside? Our gay community is more resilient than that. So, indeed, are most people. Dramatists since Ibsen have reiterated past the point of platitude the idea that someone need only be told a nasty home-truth in order to suffer total breakdown; and I, for one, never really believed it in the first place.

Oh well, there's a heartier, more extrovert evening on offer at the Bush. *Fosdyke Two*, like its predecessor, is dedicated to a proposition that I, who hie from the cosy vistas outside Tunbridge Wells, could not possibly refute: that tripe, staple food in the working North, is intrinsically funny. Tripe wars, tripe smugglers, and tripe-smoking dens are there to prove the point; and it all ends with the male members of the cast urging the audience to pelt the women with tiny slices of what looks like bleached jellyfish. I missed. The show, on the whole, didn't.

Television

Russell Davies

People Power

After 150,000 miles of travelling, over four continents, *The Long Search* (BBC-2) of Ronald Eyre came to an end not with a bang or a whimper, but with a cup of tea. Jackson's of Piccadilly brand, spooned from a squat red caddy designed to resemble a London bus. He had decided not to say goodbye to us, Mr Eyre explained; and so he put the kettle on instead. The gesture, I take it, was one of gnomic resignation, on Buddhist lines, but also one of defiance against Pascal, whose dictum that the sole cause of man's unhappiness is his inability to stay quietly in his room had been the starting point of this, the 13th programme, *Loose Ends*. Mr Eyre was signalling to us that a tidy bedsitter and a pot of char were now quite enough for him. He had plenty to think about.

And so he has. The series has been an interesting one, and in some ways encouraging. Several inspirational, even inspiring talkers have been brought before the cameras: notably, on this occasion, an intensely intelligent black octogenarian church elder in San Francisco, and Professor Das Gupta from India, amazingly cheerful and decrepit ('I am an individual. I shall be universal' was his happy definition of death). The very fact that some of Eyre's conversations were possible at all occasioned me pleasurable surprise – none more so than his natter with a Zen abbot from Kyoto, who might have been expected to disdain language altogether, let alone give a man from the BBC his answers in English.

But nobody's answers helped explain to me why I should cease to regard religion as something created by man to fulfil man's need. Religion is required by people who cannot stop themselves feeling about life that 'there must be some *reason* for it all', a reason outside themselves. This has always seemed to me a very arrogant claim. There is no reason to suppose that human life has any justification, or indeed any pattern apart from, primarily, animal antagonism and, secondarily, the patterns man imposes on it. Of course, the moral restraints of religion have often helped him to manage this, and still do, sometimes by surprisingly physical means – hence some fascinating glimpses, throughout Eyre's films, of men and women strenuously working off their unruly energies in ritual.

Wherever there is poverty, moreover, religion is strong. For the miserable there is great comfort in the prospect that one's 'reward', markedly lacking on earth, may await one in heaven. The Eastern version of this – which meets the more immediate need, and to which, I sensed, Eyre was very much drawn – is a sort of logical trap: to acquire serenity, you must first of all be serene. Then, suddenly, there you are. The tendency of Eastern priests to smile or even giggle at Eyre as they revealed an idea of this kind must have increased its attraction in the eyes of many viewers, though to me it is still a brilliantly camouflaged form of unwarrantable complacency. But enough. I come not to offend, any more than Eyre, padding about the world like a shorn Old English sheepdog, came to justify.

The long search of Melvyn Bragg ended too, with his final *Read All About It* (BBC-1), but of course he has found a crock of gold. At ITV, he will be that much *nearer the people*, I suppose. I like Melvyn a lot, but I must say I have always found his populist obsession hard to reconcile with the atmosphere round his table, staffed as it has so often been (and it was here) with the likes of Lady Antonia Fraser, Margaret Drabble and Michael Frayn brainbox elitists all. I know the likes of Rodney Marsh have been on too, but they haven't made much difference; and this is where Melvyn's problem will always lie. The people he most wants to speak to, and elicit responses from, do not as a rule care to justify their preferences, in reading or anything else. They are too busy trying to enjoy themselves after the dreary labours of the day to worry about the way their tastes are taking them.

If proof of the proposition were needed it came in *This England* (ITV) with Tony Palmer's film, *Wigan Casino*. This weird establishment, a dance hall for soul fans opens Saturday nights from 12.30 a.m. until breakfast time, at which point the assembled enthusiasts, fuelled by a night-long diet of nothing stronger than Coke, pile back into their charabancs and depart for home which in some cases is as far away as Cornwall. The 10 per cent of fans who actually come from Wigan and environs adjourn, meanwhile, to the nearby Wigan International Swimming Pool for an invigorating plunge. Socially, it all seems remarkably healthy, though it can't be doing much for the physical well-being of those who do it every week, and still less for the ones whose Sunday morning coach takes them on to another dancing club, for a second night of wakeful jitterbugging.

Palmer, as Palmer will, decorated his film with social-conscience archive material. For once, a lot of it worked. His interviewees, apart from an ancient but scarcely begrudgeable miner, were well selected. There was a merry hospital laundress ('like a lorra purrents think, yer knaw, stoppin out all night and gerrin' up to all sorts' and an articulate lathe-operator with a very impressive grasp of the role played in his life by the Wigan Event. I could have done without the 'concerned' folk-song that kept recurring ('What shall we do with the ugly ones?' Stop calling them that for a start) and, unusually for Palmer, no very clear idea came over of the type of music these peaceable gyrators habitually go for, or why – though it was apparent from the dealings of the lathe lad, a rare-record

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stockist on the side, that the taste involved is almost academically circumscribed and refined.

Having hated *Horizon*'s chaotic melodrama on Jung (BBC-2) and been disappointed by the way R. Barker's tit'n'bum obsession on *The Two Ronnies* (BBC-1) is turning him gradually into Benny Hill, I looked forward to later events on Saturday night. But *Match of the Day* (BBC-1) was a disaster. A broken leg; an underjustified outburst by Jimmy Hill on behalf of the professional-referees movement; and, worst of all, another racist football crowd jeering the confidence out of black players. It only needed an embarrassing *Parkinson* (BBC-1) to complete the evening, and his guest, Marvin Hamlisch, an American film-music supplier, duly obliged. His talent for impromptu songsmithing was okay; but the loud self-advertising patter was the least supportable since a huge and grotesque Wurlitzer organist called Carlo Curley treated his audience like oafs on BBC a few weeks ago. This American tradition, pianist into loudmouth, is worth looking into.

Opera

Eric Sams

Fatal Vision

Macbeth *BBC-2 and Radio 3*
Le Nozze di Figaro *Covent Garden; further performances 16, 19 December*

Let's tiptoe reverently behind the scenes of TV opera. Each studio production will reach as many people in one evening as Covent Garden in a lifetime. For many of the viewing millions, this will be their first taste of opera; and their last unless they find it wholesome and appetising. So why put *Macbeth* on the mass menu? Because it's the essence of popular TV, perhaps, all knock-out competition and elimination, complete with sudden-death play-off? Not so; buzzer and gong. *Radio Times* confides the real reasons, which are so much more relevant and creative. Take for instance the fortunate fact that *Macbeth* happens to fit in with some of the fantasies of its producer, Brian Large (no details are given, but he may find that his seniors are reluctant houseguests). Furthermore, he feels that television is particularly well suited to handle witchcraft and evil. No doubt many viewers had already suspected it was that kind of medium. But this is not just the average evil normally provided for everyday family viewing; it's several cuts above that.

The point has been deliberately enlarged, and driven home hard with the hammer of studio techniques. These, though quite different from the techniques of Hammer studios, avowedly serve the same purpose; they deeply double-dye the blackness of the evil, which then meets the eye with a striking bang. They include such refinements as painted glass screens, triangular modules with holes right through, and a rigidly mineral colour-scheme of silver, pewter and iron. The visual quality is neatly caught in the words of the designer, David Myers-cough-Jones: 'I think we see the Macbeths as being, in a sense, the creation of the witches, and we have the witches conjuring this metallic castle out of a thorn-riddled ice landscape.' The murky atmosphere has also been acutely analysed, and found to contain such elements as evil, greed, death and murder, with more than a trace of vaulting ambition. As the last scholarly allusion shows, there is no passing the buck here. The whole problem of good and evil, fair and foul, has been squarely confronted from the TV viewpoint; and the declared aim of creating an immense void by means of sweeping gestures has been comprehensively achieved.

Yet one timely inspiration justified the entire enterprise: *finis coronat opera*. While all this creativity was going on, sound radio offered a simultaneous stereo transmission of Verdi's *Macbeth*. For best results, viewers are advised to turn off TV sound. But there was some case for retaining the vision; close-ups can provide the viewer with some very powerful spectacles. Patricia Johnson made her features work very effectively for her interpretation of Lady Macbeth, whose most culpable moment, I thought, was her complicity in the murder of her own sleep-walking scene. The voice-over treatment had a predictably fatal outcome. Norman Bailey, magnificently sombre of voice and demeanour, was plainly well aware of the expressive possibilities of the medium. But I never felt he had wholly mastered them. His devilish Macbeth looked to be the very image of his saintly John the Baptist in the recent Covent Garden *Salome*. Of course it is just coincidence that in each role his head is removed and replaced by a wax replica. All the same, I feel he would be wise to beware of such casting, and devote his expressive features to more mobile characters. As Banquo, Nicolai Ghiaurov gave a perfect theatre performance, while Neil Shicoff as Macduff and Robin Leggate as Malcolm excelled in the required style.

Best of all was the sumptuous playing of the LPO under Robin Stapleton. It's not their fault if the close camera-work occasionally caught the singers desperately swivelling in search of a down-beat, or visibly counting one, two, three. Even studio productions have their drawbacks; so the BBC's announced policy of continuing relays direct from opera-houses is all the more welcome and reassuring. At first sight the current revival of *Figaro* looks distinctly televisual. The conventional but convincing scenery and costumes would make a pretty picture. Karl Böhm presides over the excellent orchestra like a Jungian archetype of wisdom and benevolence; Hermann Prey's ebullient and dulcet Figaro is well matched by a strong cast. The Mozartian blend of earnestness and sparkle has already reached and refreshed even more millions than any TV opera; and licence-holders would be interested to learn how many times it could be relayed for the price of one studio production.

Admittedly *Figaro* avoids overt violence, give or take a slap or two. But its sexual and social jigsaw may well fit the fantasies of many consumers, not just the producer's. It's not only *Upstairs, Downstairs* but also, for a whole act, in my lady's chamber. There is no evil to speak of, unless we count Almaviva's penchant for the nymphet Barbarina; but the cameras could at least point to some authentic witchcraft (close-up of blood-stained ribbon) in Cherubino's love-charm for the Countess. Indeed, all the great Mozart operas embody enchantment; their typical interplay of disguise and confusion may even suggest that all human love is a case of mistaken identity, and that nothing matters except the movement and pattern of the dance. On any analysis, however, they offer no obvious message to be spelt out in the big red underlined italic capitals of studio production. The alternative of direct relay, we are told, would 'certainly not make good television'. But good opera may be the sound criterion; the TV *Macbeth* manifestly owed more to musical art than studio technique. Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible to feeling as to sight?

Magazines

Julian Symons

Ads & Ends

My most recent encounter with *Exchange and Mart* came in relation to Stumpz. This was a cricket game that I used to play before the war with a poet friend in whose flat I lived. Isolated from his wife and screaming child downstairs, we played in my room Test Matches and county games that lasted for hours. Enthusiasts for indoor cricket games – and I must have played 20 variations, from Balyna with its metal batsmen and precipitous bowling incline, to the simplest kind of paper cricket in which c means caught, f bowled and k stumped – may like to know that in Stumpz it was possible to bowl off breaks, leg breaks and googlies on the off, wicket or leg, and that the strokes available included the pull – the term 'hook' was not much in use then – and the leg glance. When I described all this many years later to my young son who was both cricketer and cricketeer (a reasonable word for those who enjoy simulated cricket), he was overwhelmed. Stumpz was obviously infinitely desirable. Could it be found?

It took some time to discover who had made the game, and when I did I learned that it had gone out of production during the war, and had never been revived. Perhaps it was too detailed ever to have been popular. I turned, as I had done in the past, to *Exchange and Mart*, and put an advertisement under 'Sports and Pastimes'. Angling, archery, billiards, chess, darts, football, golf, hang gliding, karate, kites, model railways, sand yachting, shooting, skateboards, ski-ing, sub-aqua, surfing, swimming, table tennis and toys are now in-

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cluded in this section, but I put two or three lines under the vague general 'Games'. Obviously the story ends in success, or I shouldn't be telling it. A letter came from the Midlands, a cheque was sent, an absolutely mint Stumpz arrived, two cricketeers were temporarily happy.

Exchange and Mart contains nothing but advertisements. The issue I am looking at runs to 120 pages plus an 88-page separate section given to motoring. There are other magazines that contain no editorial matter, but they are not on this scale. That phrase about a license to print money applies perfectly to *Exchange and Mart*. Apart from the staff needed to place advertisements in their proper section and group, the only expenses are printing costs. There used, as I remember, to be an arrangement by which buyer and seller could use the paper as a middleman, but this no longer exists.

It has been replaced by the suggestion that you should wait to clear a cheque through your bank before parting with goods. Fair enough, but what if the advertiser is dishonest and doesn't send the goods, or they aren't as described? Well, you have to find this out for yourself in the correspondence between seller and buyer, or of course you can go and look at the goods yourself. I once, when living in the Romney Marsh, sold some racing cars and track, and people came 30 or 40 miles to look at them.

The exchange side of the paper, which was important at one time, has now diminished to half a column on the last page, but it is still likely to contain some fascinating items. An advertiser wants to dispose of a Rolex watch, 'professional quality' tape-recorder and a frame tent, in exchange for a fibreglass boat, tourer caravan or chalet, and asks at the end, 'why'? Why what? Presumably, why should somebody with a tourer caravan or chalet want to exchange them for watch, tape recorder and tent, even though they are said to have 'new value £850+'. Somebody with a 57-foot diesel ketch, 'excellent sea boat well maintained, free mooring for one year St Tropez', wants £60,000 for it, or would do a swap for 'investment property, commercial or factory premises, country house, cash either way'. Can there be many people with country houses who want to exchange them for a 57-foot ketch? I suppose you only need one.

It is dangerous to buy *Exchange and Mart*. Once fairly into it, you are likely to find other reading pre-empted for the rest of the week. Not that 'reading' is quite the word, for books don't rate very strongly in the paper. The columns given to them are occupied by comics and boys' (apostrophe ignored) books, plus magazines and reference books, with only occasional ads asking for 'any offers' to buy 'Four Plays (O. Wilde) 1944, Phases of English Poetry (Herbert Read) 1928, Marie Corelli's Boy, 1900'. Advertisements with a sexual flavour are perhaps discouraged, certainly absent. 'Are You Getting Enough?' turns out to refer to 'Fresh Air, Exercising a Dog, We Mean!' An exception here is perhaps the 'Titillating Teaser Set' for women. 'All the world loves a teaser – but watch out you don't go too far with our spicy Teaser Fun Set. The ¼ cup uplift sling Bra gives fabulous "push-up" effect . . .' How far would too far be in such a case?

Most readers buying the paper without a specific purpose are likely to be drawn to the 'Collecting' section. You can buy banknotes ('B248 £1 Peppiat A08H unc. £6.50'), beer mats, wine bottles, butterflies and badges, and that is only one letter of the alphabet. I am drawn myself to the really eccentric, the unnecessary, the unbelievable. Take the home lamp for instance, which gives instant light without wiring. 'Just screw it in the ceiling or wall and the job is done.' Why did I have my house rewired? What about the Piezo Auto Spark Lighter which will light gas rings, grills and pilot lights without petrol, flint or batteries? Or, for those like me with a psychological aversion to packing parcels, the 'Wrap Up', a 'sensational new tension binding' which will secure any parcel in a moment with polypropylene strapping and metal clamps? Or the Tie Tidy, which will hold dozens of ties separately in a six-inch space, instead of on my present bit of string?

What about the magnetic window cleaner with which you can clean and polish the outside of your windows from the inside, the plans which show you how to build your own seven-foot grandfather clock ('make a family heirloom and save money'), the plastic cartwheels in wood effect finish ('very authentic') the tinkers' caravan kits, the chess moulds, the devices for making your own wood burnings (what are they?), the possibility of joining the Matchbox Label Society, the demand for recruits in the 93rd and 44th Foot regiments to refight the Battle of New Orleans? Can one avoid all these temptations, and a hundred more? The addicted *Exchange and Mart* reader, like the chain-smoker or the inveterate book reviewer, knows that there is only one cure: cut it out. Even this brief exposure to those heady pages has prompted me to order the Tie Tidy.

In our issue of 2 December 1977, the price of *Napoleon and the Restoration of the Bourbons* (Longman) by T. B. Macaulay should have been given as £5.50.

Weekend Competition

No 2494 **Set by May Day**

The answers to 'Where have you been all the day, Billy boy?', 'Who is Sylvia?', 'Where have all the flowers gone?', 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor?' and other interrogatory first lines would nowadays be rather different. Up-to-date versions, please, of what follows these (or other similar) openings. Twelve lines max; by 6 January.

Result of No 2491 Set by E. O. Parrott

We asked for anachronistic contributions to the NS series on magazines.

Report **by Len the Unlucky**

One of those comps which prove to be a dead give-away. Now we know about the piles of mags you keep by your bedside – and, rest assured, your secrets will not be safe with us. Most of you became so feverish after flicking through your back numbers that you lost both your cool and your style; only Peter Peterson (Thomas Browne/*Playboy*) managed to keep his prurience at bay. A scornful fiver for him, and for Shakespeare/*What's On*, Pope/NS and Burton/*Radio Times*. The pile of precious Partridges remains intact. Buck up there, you idle brutes.

Our social history lay hid in night;
God said, 'Let there be Webbs,' and all
was light.
With Whiggish zeal they took the party view
That the old statesmen should yield place
to New,
And, lacking favour in the public prints,
Founded their own, to make the Tories wince.

The fearless NS, HOWARD at the helm,
The foremost weekly journal of the realm,
With beady optick and sharp-pointed pen
Surveys the world from China to South Ken;
For justice argues, and for freedom fights,
And from the Left it puts the world to rights.
But not by politics alone lives man,
The learned staff presume the Arts to scan,
And, after a judicious scrutiny,
Will sometimes two cheers give, but
seldom three.
S. J. STANLEY

Though ruder heads there be that, to put their senses in a swoun, revel in contemplation of these superlative Ideas of Womanhood, 'tis surely the part of Wisdom to eschew such hyperbolical distillations of the ubiquitary essence of lust; for that Organ and Instrument of the irrational soul which is the Debt we owe to the Beasts stirreth itself inordinately enough already, without pictive incitements to carnality: nor do I hold them free of censure who thus indiscreetly expose the back-parts and lower sides of our common humanity. And truely, whether such deliquescence of manners, frequent in the decline of Empires, as *Plutarch* instructeth us, be not for us an ominous prognostick, were a quaere worthy of deeper consideration.

PETER PETERSON

What's On: a shining print that, like a meteor,
Goes and returns to fit the ordain'd cycle,
And presages events, some great, some petty,
Whose resolution oft bespeaks disaster.
Trust not the honey'd pens of paid soothsayers
Who spy theatrick joys and lofty passions.
E'en harlots who parade lascivious measures –
Sans top, sans everything – will stand reveal'd
As painted, wrinkled hags; and lusty hostlers
Who vaunt their viands prove
gloomy poisoners.
'Tis better, then, to trust in chance than doubt
This fickle guide. Or do I mean *Time Out*?
C. VITA-FINZI

Some of these sheets there be that inflame lust or sharpen covetousness; but this *Radio Times* is the very *fons et origo* of sloth. And though to Ulysses at his mast the syrens, says Homer, sang sweetly, yet *Radio Times* lays heaviness upon the limbs, weariness upon the heart, numbness upon the brain without art, unless it be that art Galen contemns which deadens by repetition and empties the soul in a trance. For if this were not *otiosum otium* enough, to prick against every hour of the day some idle foolery, consider what Ossa is piled upon Pelion, idleness upon idleness, when these fooleries themselves prove themes for vain disquisition. Let sloth be, as Gualtier calls it, the devil's cushion; I may justly say *Radio Times* is his psalter.

HENRY TUBE

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 63 **Chess Books**

With Christmas approaching you may be considering buying a book as a present for a chess playing friend or relative. As always there is a vast selection to choose from, and I can only mention a few of the more recent additions.

For those with lavish taste there is *The Encyclopaedia of Chess*, edited by Golombek (Batsford £7.95). This is an attractive and well-illustrated work, and a brave attempt at the near impossible task of producing a thorough reference work on chess in a single volume. Doubtless there must be some omissions, but I was unable to discover any of importance. There are a few misprinted diagrams – a disease which seems to be spreading like wildfire – and the odd trivial error but on the whole it is an enjoyable book to dip into.

On a topical note there is *Chess is My Life*, Viktor Korchnoy's autobiography (Batsford £4.95). This provides a fascinating insight into Korchnoy's personality, his views on his conflict with the Soviet authorities, his (last) match with Karpov, and his recent defection. On the chess side it is a little disappointing – of the 72 games only four have any annotations and they are all tucked away at the end, more as an appendix than part of the book.

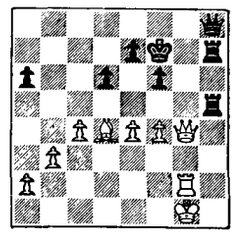
Lastly, for those who like solving problems, there is Leonard Barden's *Chess Puzzle Book* (Faber £1.95). The title is self-explanatory and, whilst I have some reservations about the choice of front cover, it is an excellent book for whiling away train journeys and the like.

White: J. Timman **Black: R. Hübner**
Tilburg '77

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, P-K3; 3. P-Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, P-QR3; 5. B-Q3, N-KB3; 6. 0-0, P-Q3; 7. P-QB4, P-KN3; 8. N-QB3, B-N2; 9. B-K3, 0-0; 10. R-B1, P-N3; 11. Q-K2, B-N2; 12. KR-Q1, QN-Q2; 13. B-N1, Q-B2; 14. P-B3, QR-B1; 15. P-QN3, Q-N1; 16. Q-Q2, KR-Q1; 17. KN-K2, B-B1; 18. B-R6, B-K2; 19. N-Q4, B-R1; 20. R-K1, R-K1; 21. K-R1, R-B4; 22. B-K3, QR-B1; 23. B-N5, R-B4; 24. B-K3, QR-B1; 25. QB-B2, B-B1; 26. B-Q3, N-R4; 27. B-B1, N-K4; 28. B-K2, N-KB3;29. B-N3, N(4)-K2; 30. KR-Q1, N-R4; 31. B-R4, KB-N2; 32. B-N5, N-B4; 33. N-B2, B-B1; 34. N-K3, P-B3; 35. B-R4, P-B4; 36. P x P, NP x P; 37. P-KN4, P x P; 38. N x P, K-R1; 39. N-B6, B-K2; 40. Q-R6 Resigns.

Problem 63

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 4 January 1978.

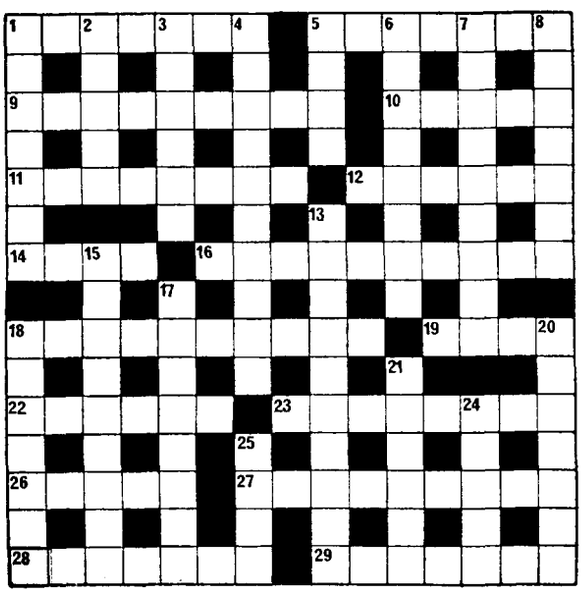


Solution to Problem 61

1. R x Pch! P x R (1 . . .K-N1; 2. R-R8ch, K x R; 3. Q-R6ch); 2. Q-B5ch, K-N1; 3. Q-N4ch, KB1; 4. Q-N7ch, K-K2; 5. Q-K5ch, K-B1 (or 5 . . .K-Q1; 6. Q-N8ch, K-K2; 7. B-B5ch); 6. B-B5ch, N-K2; 7. Q-R8 mate.

Weekend Crossword 1246

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1246, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 3 Jan.



ACROSS

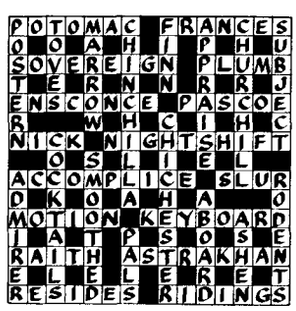
1. River in which to shoot duck with a Scotsman (7).
5. Woman who belongs to a European country? (7).
9. Unusual rose given for valuable coin (9).
10. Sound line (5).
11. Study in change of scene to establish comfortably (8).
12. Change of pace so he is a fast bowler (6).
14. Critical moment for evil one (4).
16. They work in the dark making a thing change and move (10).
18. Fellow criminal a crooked cop caught with malice (10).
19. Blame for a lack of distinction (4).
22. Activity for a month without it turning back (6).
23. Something instrumental for a vital committee (8).
26. It sounds like a ghost team (5).
27. A prince follows a wandering star of oriental material (9).
28. Desires change but stays permanently (7).
29. Yorkshire trio make a noise in their outfits (7).

DOWN

1. Door almost covered by a placard (7).
2. Slithy gimblers (5).
3. Spoil the line for a vegetable (6).
4. Something to wear when it is cold in the country (10).
5. Northern European from the Mississippi region? (4).
6. A paper is revised to judge its value (8).
7. The great man is sick after service (9).
8. Theme for citizen (7).
13. Southern town for a smart girl (10).
15. The bird hasn't got a head for one of these drinks (9).
17. Even discussion in an outhouse (8).
18. Suitor who could be married (7).
20. One of these animals would have to waste away if it lost its home (7).
21. A poet carries nothing at sea (6).
24. 'By —— roots the violets blow' (Tennyson) (5).
25. Beat up one's own side (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1244



Prizewinners to No 1244

E. Ered (London N1)

N. G. H. Thomas (Brussels)

Sarah Fox (Redhill)

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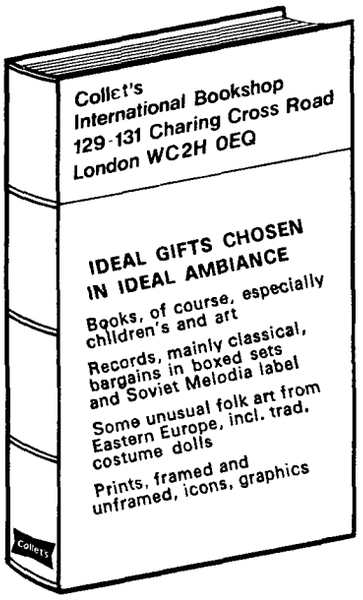
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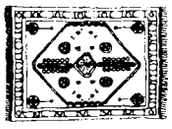

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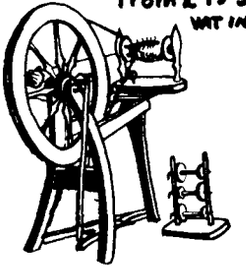

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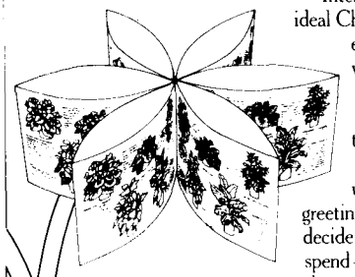

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 94 No. 2439

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Recorded booking info: 836 5332. 'The Comedy of Errors'. See daily press for dates and times (no perfs 23, 24 Dec) RSC also at The Warehouse at Donmar Theatre with: Barrie Keeffe's 'Frozen Assets'. Also at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats' and Savoy Theatre in 'Man and Superman'.

ALMOST FREE. 485 6224. 'A Pinprick of History' by Margarette D'Arcy. Mon.-Sat. 1.15 p.m. until 23 Dec.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'The Elephant Man' by Bernard Pomerance. Evgs 8 p.m. 'A compulsive & beautiful play: Times. 'Not to be missed': Guardian.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Volpone', 'The Madras House', 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight', 'Bedroom Farce', 'The Guardsman'. 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information : 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. Opens 20 Dec. 7 p.m. Subs evgs. 8.0. The 7:84 Company in 'Trembling Giants' by John McGrath.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. 16 Dec.-4 Feb. 'Cinderella'.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334

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PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALLERY, 8 Gt Newport St, WC2. 240 1969. Until 8 Jan., Martin Parr, Lennart Nilsson, Mort Kaplan.

Entertainments

SCREEN ON THE HILL (opp. Belsize Park Underground NW3). 435 3366. Robert Altman's production Welcome to LA' (AA). Progs at 2.10, 4.20, 6.30 & 8.50.

Meetings

'FIELD SPORTS': Talk by Head Gamekeeper of Richmond Park. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 18 Dec. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

COUNCIL FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM and Democracy AGM: 2.30 p.m. 17 December 1977 Room 45, LSE, Houghton St. London WC2. Open discussion on: 'The attack on Higher Education: Where does it come from?' All welcome (50p admission).

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 23 Norfolk Sq., W1. Sun. 18 Dec. Swami Bhavyananda on 'The Future of Religion and Christianity' at 5 p.m. All welcome.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 17 Dec. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. All welcome. S.a.e. for full prog.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers Sun. 18 Dec. 8 p.m. 'Masters & Gurus'. S.a.e. free pamphlet. programme, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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ALDERIAN SOCIETY offers Two Courses, Tuesday evenings beginning 10 Jan., vicinity Elephant & Castle: 1) 'Towards Becoming an Individual Psychologist' — basic training course; 2) 'Getting on with People' — course in personal growth. Details from: ASGB. 11/414 Wimbledon Park Road, London SW19 6PW.

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